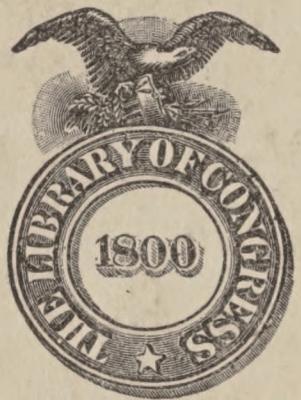


# SPOTTED DEER



ELMER RUSSELL GREGOR



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# **SPOTTED DEER**

BY ELMER R. GREGOR

*Western Indian Series*

# WHITE OTTER THE WAR TRAIL

## *Eastern Indian Series*

RUNNING FOX  
THE WHITE WOLF  
SPOTTED DEER

D. APPLETON AND COMPANY  
Publishers New York

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"PERHAPS SOME SHAWNEES ARE HIDING OVER THERE."

[Page 195]

# SPOTTED DEER

BY

ELMER RUSSELL GREGOR

AUTHOR OF "THE WHITE WOLF," "THE  
WAR TRAIL," "RUNNING FOX," ETC.



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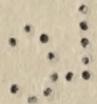
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## CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE CRY OF THE LOON . . . . .	1
II. A NIGHT OF ANXIETY . . . . .	8
III. CAPTURED . . . . .	17
IV. A WILY CAPTIVE . . . . .	27
V. THE SHAWNEE CAMP . . . . .	38
VI. A TRYING ORDEAL . . . . .	50
VII. THE MYSTERY WOMAN . . . . .	68
VIII. THE ALARM . . . . .	78
IX. AWAY ON THE SEARCH . . . . .	88
X. THE ABANDONED CANOE . . . . .	100
XI. A COUNCIL OF WAR . . . . .	115
XII. ON THE TRAIL . . . . .	125
XIII. A STRANGE ALLY . . . . .	138
XIV. WAITING AND WATCHING . . . . .	148
XV. AN EASY VICTORY . . . . .	155
XVI. A DARING RUSE . . . . .	169
XVII. SPOTTED DEER OBTAINS HIS FREEDOM . . . . .	178
XVIII. SHAWNEE TREACHERY . . . . .	192
XIX. SURROUNDED . . . . .	207
XX. A TIMELY RESCUE . . . . .	224



# SPOTTED DEER

## CHAPTER I

### THE CRY OF THE LOON

**S**POTTED DEER was returning to the Delaware village from a hunting expedition. He was in high spirits for he had been most successful. His canoe contained the carcass of a fat young buck, a brace of geese and several grouse. Spotted Deer sang softly to himself. It was a simple song of thanks to Getanittowit, the Great One.

Listen, Getanittowit, I am singing about you.  
Getanittowit has filled my canoe with meat.  
Getanittowit has made me a great hunter.  
O Getanittowit, I feel good about it.

It was a glorious day in early autumn. The soft balmy air was perfumed with the invigorating fragrance of the pines. The water sparkled in the sunshine. A smoky blue haze hung between the hills. The forest blazed with color. Spotted Deer looked about him with delight. A red-tail hawk circled slowly above his

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## *Spotted Deer*

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head. A woodpecker drummed its challenge upon a dead pine. Spotted Deer smiled at the sound as he recalled an occasion when his friend Running Fox had used it as a signal to fool his foes. Lost in reverie, Spotted Deer ceased paddling to watch the great black and white woodpecker hammering noisily on a bleached limb of the pine. Having found no evidence of foes in the Delaware hunting grounds, the young warrior felt secure.

"Hi, Papaches, you are making a big noise up there," he laughed, as he shook his bow at the bird.

The next moment he grew silent and alert. The call of Quiquingus, the loon, sounded somewhere behind him. Spotted Deer looked anxiously up the river. There was something about the call which made him suspicious. He searched the water with great care, but saw nothing of the loon. He became uneasy. Several disturbing questions rose in his mind. Was the call false? Was it a signal from his foes? Had he been discovered?

The latter possibility was alarming as he was more than a day's journey from the Delaware camp. Spotted Deer was undecided as to just what he should do. Many moments passed while he watched anxiously for the loon. The woodpecker had flown. The forest was silent.

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## *The Cry of the Loon*

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Spotted Deer hoped that the cry would be repeated. When he failed to hear it, his suspicions grew stronger. He wondered if some sharp-eyed scout were watching from the edge of the forest. The thought made him cautious. He paddled into the center of the river, where he was a long bow-shot from either shore. Then for a long time he waited and watched. However, as he neither saw nor heard anything further of the loon, he finally determined to continue on his way.

Spotted Deer had gone only a short distance when the call was repeated. Stopping his canoe, he again searched the water. The mysterious cry seemed to have come from somewhere along the west shore of the river—the side on which he had seen the woodpecker. Spotted Deer examined the shadows with infinite care, but his efforts were futile. The loon was nowhere in sight. His failure to discover it, and the significant fact that the call had been repeated when he started down the river, increased his uneasiness. He was almost convinced that the cry was counterfeit. Still he wished to be sure. He waited some time, watching for the conspicuous white breast of Quiquingus, the Laugher.

“It is not Quiquingus,” he declared, at last.

Having decided that the call was an imitation, Spotted Deer wondered why the one who

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## *Spotted Deer*

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had made it had risked disclosing his hiding place. In a moment the truth flashed through his mind. He believed the call had been a signal to announce his approach to some one farther down the river. The thought caused him grave concern. He feared that he had blundered into a perilous predicament.

"I must watch out," Spotted Deer murmured, uneasily.

He permitted the canoe to drift slowly with the water while he meditated upon a plan of action. Feeling quite certain that he had encountered a company of his foes, his chief concern was to learn if they had canoes. In that event, he believed he would be in considerable peril. If, however, his enemies were hunting through the woods on foot, he believed there was little to fear while he kept to the middle of the river.

"I will go ahead," he said.

The sun had disappeared. Twilight had fallen upon the woods. Long black shadows swept over the water. The day was far spent. Spotted Deer watched closely along the edge of the timber. He knew that it would be easy to blunder past a canoe concealed in the shadows near the shore. Several times he was deceived by half-submerged trunks of fallen trees which in the baffling twilight resembled canoes. Then, as he paddled slowly around an abrupt turn in

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## *The Cry of the Loon*

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the river, he suddenly discovered two canoes crossing directly ahead of him. Each canoe contained two paddlers. They were a considerable distance away, but as Spotted Deer was exposed in the center of the river he had little doubt that he had been seen. The actions of the distant canoemen confirmed his fears. They had ceased paddling and were looking steadily toward him. In the meantime the Delaware had turned his canoe into a stretch of quiet water to avoid drifting toward the strangers. They showed no inclination to approach, and soon disappeared into the shadows along the west side of the river.

Spotted Deer suspected a trap. He feared that other canoemen were concealed along the opposite side of the river. Under those circumstances it seemed folly to venture ahead before darkness came to shield him. Then he suddenly realized that it might be equally dangerous to loiter. He believed that other foes were somewhere behind him, and he feared that they had canoes. In that event they might sweep around the river at any moment and he would find himself trapped between his enemies. The thought was alarming. It roused him to action. He turned about and paddled slowly up the river. Keeping well within the shadows from the forest, he soon passed around the turn which

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## *Spotted Deer*

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hid him from his foes. At that moment the melancholy wail of Gokhos, the owl, sounded behind him. He knew at once that it was a signal from the canoemen.

"I am in danger," Spotted Deer said, softly.

He feared that the warriors whom he had discovered would follow him, and that other foes might come down the river in response to the signal. Aware of his peril, Spotted Deer ceased paddling and stared anxiously into the shadows. The sunset glow had faded from the sky. The forest was dark. Night was closing down. However, a narrow trail of daylight still lingered in the middle of the river. Spotted Deer looked upon it with misgiving. It was a barrier which he feared to cross.

Then he again heard the cry of Gokhos, the owl. It still came from down the river, and seemed no nearer than it was before. Spotted Deer was perplexed. Had the canoemen failed to follow him? It seemed most unlikely. He became suspicious. Perhaps his foes were attempting some clever stratagem to quiet his fears. He wondered if the call had been sounded to mislead him into believing himself free from pursuit while his enemies approached cautiously through the shadows. He watched closely. He wondered why the signals brought no response. What had become of the concealed scout who had

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## *The Cry of the Loon*

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imitated the cry of the loon? Spotted Deer began to think. Had he been deceived? Had Quiquingus himself uttered that cry? Spotted Deer scoffed at the idea. He felt sure that he would have discovered the bird if it had been anywhere within sight.

"No, no, it was not Quiquingus," he declared, emphatically.

A moment afterward he heard the call of Gokhos repeated farther up the river. His suspicions were confirmed. He realized that he was between his foes.

"Quiquingus has changed to Gokhos," he said, soberly. "I must be cautious."

## CHAPTER II

### A NIGHT OF ANXIETY

**A**S the signals were not repeated, Spotted Deer feared that his foes were approaching each other with the hope of trapping him between them. He realized that he must act quickly. For a moment only he studied his predicament. If he attempted to dash down the river, the odds were against him. He felt certain that there were two of his foes in each canoe, and he also knew that the weight of the game in his own canoe would be a serious handicap to his speed. It seemed folly, therefore, to attempt an open race for safety. Still, he knew that if he remained upon the water there would be little chance of avoiding his foes. There seemed but one thing to do, and that was to hide in the woods until the canoemen passed. He resolved to try the ruse.

Night had fallen, and forest and river were cloaked in darkness. Aware that his foes might have come within bow-shot, Spotted Deer realized that each moment was precious. Turning

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## *A Night of Anxiety*

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toward the shore he maneuvered the canoe with rare skill. It glided forward as easily and silently as a drifting leaf until Spotted Deer stopped it at the edge of the bushes. He tested the depth of the water with his paddle. It was shallow. He waited a moment or so, listening for a warning of danger. All was still. Feeling secure, Spotted Deer stepped from the canoe and waded toward the shore. As he left the water, he again stopped to listen. He heard a splash a short distance below him. His heart beat wildly. He believed that his foes were close at hand. There seemed little chance of concealing the canoe before they found him. He listened in breathless suspense. In a few moments he heard another splash. This time it gave him relief. He had recognized it as the signal of Amoch, the beaver, slapping the water with his great broad tail.

"Amoch," Spotted Deer murmured, softly. He moved cautiously along the edge of the woods until he found an opening in the under-growth. Then he drew the bow of the canoe from the water. Stooping, he seized the fore legs of the buck and dragged it from the canoe. It was a difficult task as the deer was heavy and Spotted Deer feared to make a sound. When the buck was safely on the ground, he drew the canoe into the bushes. Then he crouched behind

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## *Spotted Deer*

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it to watch and listen for the approach of his foes.

If his enemies passed, Spotted Deer planned to launch his canoe and slip noiselessly down the river. However, he disliked to abandon the deer. It seemed like presenting it to his foes. The idea irritated him. For an instant he determined to take it. Then he suddenly realized the folly of placing himself at a disadvantage.

"Perhaps they will not find it," he told himself, comfortingly.

At that moment he heard a low, indistinct sound on the water. He listened. Long, anxious moments passed. The silence was unbroken. Spotted Deer wondered if he had been deceived. He waited in trying suspense to learn if his fears were real.

"There is no one there," he said, finally.

Then the call of Gokhos, the owl, sounded directly before his hiding place. It was low, and soft, and querulous, and he realized why it had seemed so far away when he heard it before. He listened anxiously for the sound of voices, but the signal was followed by silence. Spotted Deer watched eagerly for the canoe, but it was hidden in the darkness. He wondered if it had passed. He listened for the slightest clew, but heard nothing which would tell him what he wished to know. He waited impatiently for an

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## *A Night of Anxiety*

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answer to the call. Many moments passed before he heard it. At last it echoed weirdly across the water. Spotted Deer tried to locate it. He decided that it came from the north. It convinced him that his foes were searching along both sides of the river.

Spotted Deer tried to guess the identity of the mysterious canoemen. He believed that they were Mohawks. The thought filled him with alarm. It suggested disturbing possibilities. They might be scouts moving down the river to spy upon the Delaware camp. Perhaps a war party was following close behind them. The idea filled him with gloom. He knew that the unsuspecting Delawares were totally unprepared for an attack, and he feared to think what might happen if a strong force of Mohawks should suddenly appear before the village. The possibility roused him. His heart filled with a reckless resolve to help his people. He determined to ignore his own peril, and slip away to warn the Delawares.

“Yes, yes, I must go,” Spotted Deer told himself.

He listened for further sounds from his foes. As he heard nothing to arouse his suspicions he determined to begin his perilous journey down the river. Aware that the slightest sound might betray him, he drew the canoe toward the

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## *Spotted Deer*

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water with infinite care. After he had gone a bow-length he stopped to listen. All was quiet. Spotted Deer felt encouraged. Slowly, carefully, a bow-length at a time, he dragged the canoe to the river. When he reached the water he stopped and stared anxiously into the night. Then he stepped into the canoe, and pushed it from the shore.

Once afloat, Spotted Deer believed that he would be safer in the center of the river. The signals had sounded near the shore, and he felt sure that his enemies would expect to find him hiding in the heavy shadows from the forest. The entire river was shrouded in darkness, and Spotted Deer was unable to see more than a bow-length beyond his canoe. He paddled slowly, moving his paddle through the water to avoid making the slightest sound. Realizing that at any moment he might collide with his foes, he was alert and ready for an emergency.

Spotted Deer had gone several arrow flights when he suddenly heard voices. They were close by. He stopped his canoe, and attempted to locate the sounds. The talk had ceased. Spotted Deer wondered if his foes were as near as they had seemed. He knew that voices might be heard a long distance over water, and he realized that the sounds might have come from near the shore. He determined to make sure. His

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## *A Night of Anxiety*

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canoe drifted slowly with the water. He made no effort to stop it. It was an easy and noiseless way of slipping down he river.

In a few moments Spotted Deer again caught the low, ominous murmur of subdued voices. This time he located the sounds. They seemed to be directly ahead of him. The discovery alarmed him. He stopped his canoe and turned abruptly from his course. Having performed the maneuver without a sound, Spotted Deer hoped to pass safely by his foes. He had taken only a few paddle strokes, however, when he discovered a long, black object squarely in his path. There was no time to turn. Throwing all his strength into a quick deep stroke of his paddle, Spotted Deer crashed bow foremost against the side of a canoe. It immediately capsized and spilled its astounded occupants into the river. By the time they rose from beneath the water, the wily young Delaware had disappeared into the night.

Spotted Deer paddled furiously down the middle of the river. His eyes twinkled merrily as he heard the angry shouts of the men in the water. They were calling wildly to their companions. Spotted Deer grew serious when he heard their appeals answered from various parts of the river. He suddenly realized that he had encountered a strong force of his enemies. How-

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## *Spotted Deer*

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ever, having successfully eluded them he was hopeful of getting away.

Then he heard the long, piercing shriek of Nianque, the lynx, some distance farther down the river. The cry had sounded perfectly natural, and still, under the circumstances, he mistrusted it. He ceased paddling and listened suspiciously. Precious moments passed. The call was not repeated. The cries and signals from his foes had stopped. An ominous hush had settled upon the forest. Spotted Deer feared it. He believed that the lynx cry had carried a warning.

“It is bad,” he whispered.

Fearing to loiter, he moved cautiously down the river. He wondered if crafty scouts were waiting to intercept him. Could he escape them? The possibility of another collision with his mysterious foes tried his courage. Still, he believed that his safest plan was to continue on his way. Night was his ally, and he hoped to pass safely in the darkness. He felt quite sure that his foes were close behind him. He feared that they would soon overtake him. The thought made him reckless. He resolved to continue down the river.

Spotted Deer paddled desperately to keep ahead of his pursuers. He believed that they would separate and again attempt to trap him between them. The thought made him wary.

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## *A Night of Anxiety*

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He determined to keep in the center of the river, as he feared that his foes were on both sides of him. His one chance seemed to be to go ahead. He realized that even that course might bring him into contact with some lurking foe. The mysterious lynx cry still lingered in his mind. It depressed him. If it had been a signal, he felt almost certain that he would find his enemies waiting for him farther down the river.

It was not long before Spotted Deer saw his suspicions confirmed. He was astounded to see the river ahead of him brightly illuminated. On each shore a great fire was blazing fiercely at the edge of the water. The light from the flames spread far out over the river. Spotted Deer realized that it would be impossible to pass without being seen. His heart filled with despair. He appeared to have run into a trap. There seemed to be slight chance of escape. He paddled wildly toward the shore. Sheltered by the darkness, he hoped to elude the foes who had pursued him down the river. He was within bow-shot of the woods when he heard the careless splash of a paddle close behind him. Aware that he had been discovered, Spotted Deer made frantic efforts to reach the shore. An arrow hummed threateningly above his head. A moment afterward he heard another arrow strike the water within bow-length of his canoe. He

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*Spotted Deer*

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glanced uneasily over his shoulder. A grim, black shape swept out of the night. Then his canoe crashed against the shore. A piercing yell rang across the water. Seizing his weapons, Spotted Deer jumped from the canoe, and dashed into the woods.

## CHAPTER III

### CAPTURED

HAVING gained the forest in safety, Spotted Deer stopped for a moment to listen. He heard signals passing along the river. Then a twig snapped close beside him. He turned in alarm. At that instant some one sprang upon him and bore him to the ground. He struggled desperately, but the shouts of his unknown assailant soon brought assistance, and the young Delaware was speedily overcome. His arms were twisted behind him and securely bound, and then he was pulled to his feet and led toward the river.

Spotted Deer was bewildered by the suddenness of the attack. It was some moments before he fully realized what had happened. His first thought was to identify his captors. It was difficult to recognize them in the darkness. He listened closely to catch their talk. Having been a captive in the Mohawk camp, he was familiar with the Mohawk dialect. These mysterious strangers, however, spoke a different

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## *Spotted Deer*

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tongue. It was evident that they were not Mohawks. Spotted Deer was astounded by the discovery. Into whose hands had he fallen? He quickly guessed.

"Shawnees," he murmured.

When they reached the river, Spotted Deer was led to a canoe. He seated himself without protest. It seemed folly to resist. There were three canoes along the shore. One belonged to Spotted Deer. Two stalwart paddlers entered the canoe with the Delaware. The warrior who seated himself in the stern placed his bow and several arrows close beside him. It was a significant warning which Spotted Deer understood. He saw several figures moving about at the edge of the water. It was impossible to count them. Then the canoe was pushed from shore, and Spotted Deer wondered what fate awaited him. He had little hope.

As the Shawnees paddled swiftly toward the middle of the river, they raised a piercing cry that echoed threateningly through the night, and filled the Delaware with gloomy premonitions. It had barely died away before it was answered from various parts of the river. Then the cry of Nianque, the lynx, again sounded through the darkness. A wild chorus of shouts immediately rose in reply. Spotted Deer looked down the river. The fires were still burning fiercely. He

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## *Captured*

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saw several figures moving about in the glow. He believed they were waiting for the canoes.

The Shawnees met in the center of the river. Spotted Deer counted four canoes. Each held two paddlers. Two canoes were brought alongside of the one in which he sat, and the Shawnees peered curiously at him. He had little doubt that they were the warriors whom he had encountered farther up the river. They exchanged a few words with his guards, but as Spotted Deer was unfamiliar with the Shawnee dialect he could not understand them. Then the canoes were turned toward the fire on the west shore of the river.

As they moved slowly down the river the Shawnees began to sing. Spotted Deer felt sure it was a boastful recital of their recent exploit. Then, as they drew nearer the fire, he saw a canoe crossing from the east side of the river. It, too, held two paddlers. They apparently were eager to be present when the captive was brought in, for they were paddling at top speed.

When the canoes entered the illuminated stretch of water, Spotted Deer found an opportunity to study his foes. He examined the warrior in the stern of the canoe. Although apparently of middle age he appeared vigorous and active, and his deep chest and wide, sloping

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## *Spotted Deer*

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shoulders denoted endurance and strength. His face was stern and sullen, and his eyes flashed threateningly into the steady, unflinching eyes of his captive. There was earth on his leggings and a long red scratch down his arm, and Spotted Deer believed he was the one with whom he had fought. There was something about him that suggested power, and the Delaware felt sure that he was a leader.

In the meantime the other canoes had come nearer, and Spotted Deer saw the paddlers at close range. There were six. Four were young men, and the others were mature warriors who seemed about the age of the Shawnee who faced him in the canoe. While Spotted Deer was examining his foes, they were equally occupied in staring at him. There were two in particular who glared fiercely into his face, and threatened him. He had little doubt that they were the warriors whom he had thrown into the river. As Spotted Deer turned his head, one of them struck him with the paddle. They laughed derisively as the enraged Delaware faced them with flashing eyes. Angered by Spotted Deer's boldness, the Shawnee again raised his paddle, but the warrior in the stern of the canoe spoke sharply and the blow was withheld.

A few moments later the canoes reached the shore. Four Shawnees awaited them. As the

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## *Captured*

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warrior stepped from the bow of the canoe the other Shawnee motioned for Spotted Deer to follow him. The Delaware was immediately surrounded by his foes. They crowded closely about him, jeering and threatening, and scowling fiercely into his face. Spotted Deer showed no fear. He faced them with a calm courage that compelled respect. The Shawnees quickly realized that their youthful prisoner was a bold and seasoned warrior.

The older of the two warriors who had shared the canoe with Spotted Deer seemed to be in authority. He appeared to be the leader of the company. He confronted Spotted Deer and studied him with great care. The others watched in silence. Spotted Deer took equal pains to examine his foe. Thus for some moments captor and captive stared at each other. They offered a striking contrast—the Shawnee stalwart and mature, a seasoned veteran of the war trail; the Delaware agile and youthful, and equally familiar with the privations and perils of the warrior. The same indomitable courage flashed in the eyes of both. Each saw it and realized its significance. Spotted Deer read cruelty and hatred in the glance of his captor. The Shawnee saw fearlessness and defiance in the eyes of his captive.

At last the Shawnee turned and addressed his

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## *Spotted Deer*

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companions. His tone was sarcastic as he pointed toward the Delaware, and the Shawnees laughed mockingly. Spotted Deer felt the hot fighting blood surge to his brain. He was filled with sudden and intense hatred for this haughty foe who seemed to regard him with contempt. However, the wily young warrior was far too crafty to betray his feelings. Aware that the Shawnees would be quick to read the slightest trace of emotion, he feigned a stolid indifference that baffled them.

Spotted Deer was led nearer the fire, and ordered by signs to seat himself upon the ground. Two Shawnees sat beside him. They held tomahawks and made it plain that they were eager for an opportunity to use them. The rest of the company stood a short distance off, staring at the fire. The leader seemed annoyed. Spotted Deer believed he was impatient with the men who had illuminated the river. At his command two of his companions hastened into the woods. In a few moments they returned carrying long saplings with which they scattered the blazing logs and rolled them into the water.

When the fire had been destroyed, the Shawnees carried a number of embers into the woods, and made a small fire behind the shelter of a large rock. The blaze on the opposite side of the river was left to burn out. Spotted Deer

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## *Captured*

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believed it was a clever maneuver to deceive any enemies who might happen to be in the vicinity.

The night was well advanced, and the Shawnees made preparations to sleep. Spotted Deer watched them with interest. He wondered what they would do with him. For the moment, at least, there seemed little chance of escape, and still he realized that an unexpected opportunity might offer itself. His hope was destroyed when two of his foes came forward and bound his feet. Then the Shawnees gathered about him, and lay down to sleep.

Spotted Deer was helpless and miserable. The Shawnees had taken his robe, and he suffered from the cold. The rawhide thongs with which he was bound cut into his wrists and ankles, and interfered with circulation. It was impossible to sleep. He stared gloomily at a star that twinkled through an opening in the dense black canopy of tree tops. His lips moved silently in a petition to Getanittowit, the Great One.

Spotted Deer lay motionless until he felt sure that the Shawnees were asleep. Then he strained to loosen the thongs about his wrists. The effort only increased his agony. He waited a few moments, and then he tried to move his feet. The attempt was equally futile. He had been cruelly and skillfully bound, and he real-

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## *Spotted Deer*

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ized that it was folly to attempt to free himself.

Aware that only daylight might bring relief, Spotted Deer longed for the night to pass. Each moment increased his suffering, but he bore it with the stolid fortitude which he had inherited from his people, and fixed his thoughts upon the Shawnees. There were twelve in the party and he believed that they were hunters. The thought gave him comfort. His fears for his people subsided. He believed that they were in little peril from the small company of Shawnees. In fact he was greatly astounded at their boldness in venturing so far into the Delaware hunting grounds. He was also perplexed to explain the canoes. The Shawnees lived along another large river a number of days' travel to the westward, and Spotted Deer could scarcely believe that they had carried the canoes through the wilderness. They were usually encountered hunting through the woods on foot whenever they ventured into Delaware territory. Spotted Deer thought about it for some time. Then an interesting possibility suddenly entered his mind. He believed that the Shawnees had come from the north, and it was possible that they had taken the canoes from the Mohawks. In that event he had little doubt that they would either destroy them or carry them to the Shawnee camp as trophies. Then another possibility

## *Captured*

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suggested itself. Perhaps the crafty Shawnees would leave the canoes along the river to deceive the Delawares into believing that their hated foes, the Mohawks, had invaded the Delaware hunting grounds. The thought disturbed him. He feared that the stratagem might confuse his friends, and lead them on a false trail.

At that moment his thoughts were diverted by the barking of a fox on the opposite side of the river. Spotted Deer listened closely. He wondered if it was a signal. Had Delaware hunters discovered the fires? His heart bounded at the thought. The Shawnees had awakened. Spotted Deer heard them talking. He turned his head, and saw the warriors beside him sitting erect. They, too, apparently were listening. The silence continued some time. Then the quick, husky yaps of the fox again sounded across the river. The Shawnees were silent. Spotted Deer felt that they were watching him. He lay motionless.

After the call had ceased, Spotted Deer heard some one passing in the darkness. He believed that scouts had gone to the river to watch. He feared that they might discover a company of Delawares. In that event he had little hope for his life. He felt sure the Shawnees would kill him as a precaution against being betrayed into the hands of their foes. He waited in trying

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## *Spotted Deer*

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suspense to learn the outcome of the reconnaissance.

It seemed a very long time before Spotted Deer finally heard sounds which led him to suspect that the scouts had returned. He believed they had learned something important. The Shawnees were talking excitedly. In a few moments they drew close about him. He wondered if they had discovered his people, and intended to kill him. For an instant he had a reckless impulse to cry out and betray them. At that moment, however, one of the Shawnees stooped and released Spotted Deer's ankles. The Delaware took hope. He decided to remain silent. Then he was lifted to his feet. For a moment he was unable to stand. A sharp command from the leader of the company roused him to the effort. A moment afterward he was led away toward the west.

## CHAPTER IV

### A WILY CAPTIVE

THE Shawnees moved through the woods in silence. They had abandoned the canoes. Spotted Deer felt certain that they had been alarmed, and were making a stealthy retreat under cover of the night. He wondered if the Delawares had discovered them. The possibility excited him. He began to form reckless plans for escaping if his people should overtake the Shawnees.

Then he suddenly realized that it might have been the Mohawks who had been discovered along the river. In that event he believed he was in equal peril with his captors. Once overtaken by those fierce foes from the north, Spotted Deer feared that the little company would be speedily annihilated. For him, however, death would be preferable to falling into the hands of the Mohawks. Having escaped from their village, with his friend Running Fox who had carried away a priceless medicine trophy, and then killed their famous chief,

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*Spotted Deer*

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Standing Wolf, Spotted Deer knew only too well the punishment that would be inflicted upon him. If, therefore, the Mohawks were on the trail of the Shawnees he was as eager as his captors to elude them.

Spotted Deer traveled through the woods with great discomfort. Unable to use his arms, he was powerless to protect himself from contact with tree trunks and undergrowth. A guard led him through the darkness, but made no attempt to save him from the stinging blows from branches which were released by the warriors in advance. Several times Spotted Deer barely escaped having his eyes destroyed. Once he stumbled over a log and fell headlong into the undergrowth. His guard seized the opportunity to attack him. Regaining his feet the hot-tempered young Delaware turned savagely upon his foe, but the Shawnee swept his hand to his knife-sheath and Spotted Deer realized the folly of resistance. At that instant he recognized his assailant as the leader of the company. The discovery increased his hatred for that arrogant foe.

At daylight the Shawnees halted beside a stream. Spotted Deer counted them. There were only eight. He believed that the missing warriors had remained behind to watch their foes. He wondered if their comrades had

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## *A Wily Captive*

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stopped to wait for them. He finally decided that they expected the scouts to overtake them at that spot.

As the Shawnees loitered beside the stream, they produced rations of dried meat, and ate heartily. One of the warriors beside him held a bone before Spotted Deer, and laughed contemptuously. The Delaware ignored the taunt. He realized that a display of temper would only invite further affronts. The Shawnees were keeping a sharp watch upon him. Despite his helplessness they seemed to be suspicious and fearful that he might attempt to escape. Spotted Deer had hoped that, when darkness passed, they might free his arms, but they showed no intention of releasing him. He suffered intensely, but gave no sign. His agony was forgotten as he fixed his mind on plans for escape.

Then, as he sat watching his captors, he suddenly heard the notes of Gulukochsun, the wild turkey. The experienced young hunter instantly recognized the call as a counterfeit. He realized at once that it was a signal. The Shawnees showed interest. They listened in silence until the call was repeated. Then two warriors disappeared into the woods. Spotted Deer believed they had gone to meet the scouts from the river. It was not long before the latter ap-

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*Spotted Deer*

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peared. There were two. Four warriors still were missing.

The scouts were engaged in conversation with the leader of the company. The Shawnees gathered about them to listen. One, however, remained beside the Delaware. His captors seemed determined to take every precaution against his escape. Spotted Deer would have given much to know what they were saying. His guard seemed equally curious. They talked in low tones, however, and the Shawnee appeared unable to catch their words. His face betrayed his impatience. He evidently disliked the task to which he had been assigned. He began to grumble threateningly at Spotted Deer. The latter treated him with scornful indifference.

Spotted Deer felt certain that the scouts had brought word of considerable importance. The Shawnees gave unmistakable evidence of it. They were talking soberly and shaking their heads. Spotted Deer continued to watch them. He believed that enemies had been discovered along the river. Were they Delawares or Mohawks? The question caused him great suspense. If the Shawnees had stolen Mohawk canoes and left them at the river, he feared that his people would be deceived. In that event there seemed little hope for him. Having experienced the discomforts and perils of captivity

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## *A Wily Captive*

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in the Mohawk camp, Spotted Deer feared that similar trials awaited him at the Shawnee village. For a moment the idea shook his nerve. Then he drove it from his mind with the assurance that his people would come to his aid in time to save him.

In the meantime the Shawnees had ceased talking, and appeared ready to resume their journey. They showed no great haste, however, and Spotted Deer believed they had little fear of being overtaken. Their indifference made him doubt that they had encountered the Delawares. He was certain that the latter would never permit them to withdraw without a fight. It seemed probable, therefore, that the Mohawks had come down the river to recover the canoes. For a moment the thought filled him with fear for the safety of his people. Then he realized that a small force of Mohawk scouts would be unlikely to loiter near the stronghold of their foes. Spotted Deer believed that once in possession of their canoes they would lose little time in withdrawing from the Delaware hunting grounds.

As the Shawnees were crossing the stream the call of the wild gobbler again echoed through the woods. One of the scouts immediately replied. Then the Shawnees waited. In a few moments four warriors appeared. The company

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## *Spotted Deer*

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was now complete, and the leader gave the word to advance. Spotted Deer was placed between two warriors near the head of the party. He suffered greatly, for his arms were cramped and numb, and the rawhide had cut far into his swollen wrists. Pride, however, enabled him to conceal his agony from his foes.

Toward the end of the day the Shawnees stopped at a spring in the bottom of a wooded ravine. It was evident that they planned to remain there for the night. Spotted Deer grew weak at heart as he thought of the long hours of agony before him. It was gradually sapping his strength. His one fear was that he might collapse. The thought enraged him. He would rather die than appear weak before his foes.

Just before dark, however, the Shawnee leader freed the wrists of his captive. Then he offered him a generous portion of dried meat. Spotted Deer was unable to take it. His arms were powerless. The Shawnee laughed cruelly at the plight of his foe. He threw the meat upon the ground, and walked away. Spotted Deer turned his back upon it. Then for some time he was unmolested.

It was not long, however, before the Shawnees again bound his arms and feet. This time they drew the rawhide even tighter than before in the hope of forcing an appeal from the cour-

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## *A Wily Captive*

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ageous young captive. Spotted Deer remained silent. Only the threatening flash of his eyes gave warning of the fierce emotions raging in his heart. When his foes had rendered him powerless, he faced the Shawnee leader and laughed scornfully.

As the Shawnees failed to make a fire, Spotted Deer believed that they feared pursuit. The thought kept him alert. He determined to be ready if his tribesmen should attempt to rescue him. When he was finally forced to lie down in the midst of his foes, he endured his discomfort with a calm fortitude that astonished them. The night was cold and frosty, and a piercing north wind swept through the ravine. The Shawnees wriggled far down into their robes. Spotted Deer, however, was without shelter. The cold soon overcame him. Violent chills swept through him. Sharp, darting pains passed along his limbs. It seemed as if his arms were being twisted from his body. Each moment intensified his agony. There was no way to obtain relief. The night seemed endless. He prayed to Getanittowit to send daylight.

Then Spotted Deer heard something which roused him from his misery. Soft, stealthy footfalls sounded close at hand. He raised himself to listen. At that moment an arm was thrown about his neck, and he was dragged to

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## *Spotted Deer*

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the ground. A hand was clapped across his mouth, and he felt a knee against his chest. Completely bewildered, Spotted Deer wondered what had happened. He heard the Shawnees whispering excitedly. He believed that they had been overtaken by their enemies, and feared that he would betray them. Had the Delawares come? Spotted Deer listened for the familiar war cry. He feared that it might be the signal for his death. The Shawnees had become silent. They were listening and watching to interpret the peril which seemed to threaten them. Many moments passed. The footfalls had ceased. Spotted Deer wondered if the Delawares were preparing to rush upon their foes. Then he realized that it might be the Mohawks. The possibility filled him with alarm. He was not afraid to die, but he weakened at the thought of falling into their hands.

A moment afterward the suspense was ended. A loud, startled snort sounded through the darkness, and then something bounded away through the undergrowth. The Delaware and the Shawnees both understood. It was Achtu, the deer. The Shawnees laughed nervously. The warrior removed himself from Spotted Deer. There was no longer need for caution. The crisis had passed.

At daylight the Shawnees freed Spotted

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## *A Wily Captive*

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Deer from his bonds. They gave unmistakable warning that an attempt to escape would end in death. The Delaware, however, was too miserable to make the effort. It was a long time before he could use either his arms or his legs. When he had somewhat recovered, the Shawnees gave him meat. He ate it, for he was weak and hungry. Besides, he wished to prolong the interval of freedom. Meanwhile he searched his brain for a way to outwit his foes. His predicament seemed hopeless.

At sunrise the Shawnees resumed their way toward the west. Spotted Deer was astounded when they left him the freedom of his arms. A great hope rose in his heart. He believed that he might be able to leave clews which would lead his friends to his rescue. The Shawnees had taken his weapons but had left his empty knife-sheath attached to his belt. Spotted Deer found an opportunity to free it without attracting the attention of his foes. A few moments later he dropped it beside the trail. He knew that if his friend Running Fox should find it, he would recognize it at once. Then as he accompanied his captors through the woods he made every effort to leave a plain trail. Several times he appeared to stumble, and each time he cleverly overturned a stone with his foot and broke or bent the bush or limb which he

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## *Spotted Deer*

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had seized for support. His clumsiness brought angry protests from his guards but they apparently failed to detect the stratagem. Thus throughout the day the wily young Delaware left signs which he hoped his friends might eventually find and follow.

That night the Shawnees seemed more bold. They made a fire, and appeared to be in high spirits. Spotted Deer believed that they were within a day's journey of their village. He missed several warriors and he felt sure that they had gone ahead to announce their exploit in the Shawnee camp. The thought sobered and depressed him. After they had given him meat, the Shawnees again bound his wrists and feet. However, they permitted him to lie close to the fire and the warmth gave him some comfort.

The following day the Shawnees advanced through the woods with far less caution. They talked and laughed and sang, and it was evident that their recent anxiety had passed. Spotted Deer felt sure that they were approaching their village. The thought made him reckless. Although he was closely guarded, his arms were free, and he determined to seize the slightest opportunity for an attempt to escape. He believed that his foes might grow less vigilant as they drew nearer the Shawnee camp, and he hoped to catch them off their guard. He be-

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*A Wily Captive*

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came as alert and watchful as a lynx, ready at any moment to dash into the forest. Before he could act upon the reckless impulse, however, the Shawnees suddenly appeared to have guessed his intentions. They stopped him, and bound his arms behind his back.

For an instant only, Spotted Deer betrayed his anger in his face. Then as his foes began to laugh and jeer he recovered himself. His heart, however, was heavy with despair. It seemed as if his last hope had vanished. He believed that his crafty captors had taken the precaution to render him powerless against the attacks which might be made upon him as he entered the Shawnee village.

## CHAPTER V

### THE SHAWNEE CAMP

**A**T midday the Shawnees climbed to the top of a high pine-clad ridge, and Spotted Deer looked down upon a great river. Close beside it, on a grassy flat, was the Shawnee village. It was composed of many bark huts, and inclosed on three sides by a high log stockade. The front was open to the river. As the Shawnees had stopped to rest, Spotted Deer had an opportunity to study the camp. He viewed it with stirring emotions. Once inside the log barricade, he wondered what fate awaited him. He saw many people moving about at the edge of the village, and passing from lodge to lodge. Several canoes were on the river. Smoke rose from the camp.

Then one of the Shawnees uttered a piercing whoop that echoed shrilly across the valley. It roused the camp. People ran from the lodges and assembled in the center of the village. Their upturned faces made it plain that they were gazing toward the top of the ridge. The

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## *The Shawnee Camp*

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heavy timber concealed the Shawnees and their captive. The Shawnee called again, and a great shout rose from the camp. Then the dogs barked furiously.

The Shawnees began to descend toward the river. The western side of the ridge was steep and rough, and Spotted Deer was greatly handicapped. He found it difficult to remain on his feet. The Shawnees were following a narrow, precipitous trail, and there were places where the free use of both arms was almost a necessity. The Shawnees, however, showed no concern for the safety of their captive. At a number of steep places, he lost his footing and slid several bow-lengths before he regained his balance. At other spots the trail shrank to a mere foothold across the face of precipitous ledges where a false step meant severe injury or even death. Spotted Deer astounded his captors with his calm nerve and marvelous agility. More than once they expected to see him hesitate at some particularly perilous part of the trail. He never wavered, however, and made his way over places where the Shawnees were compelled to steady themselves with their hands.

“The Delaware is like Tschinque, the mountain cat,” they told one another.

When they finally emerged from the timber

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## *Spotted Deer*

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at the level of the river, they were instantly discovered from the camp. Their appearance threw the village into a commotion. The entire tribe seemed to have rushed out to see them. Men, women and children assembled beyond the stockade. They united their voices in a wild bedlam of sound that might have filled a less courageous captive with terror. Spotted Deer, however, showed no fear. His experience on the war trail, and his adventure in the Mohawk camp, had taught him what to expect in the unfortunate circumstances in which he found himself. He was prepared, therefore, to accept discomfort, torture and death with the unshakeable courage which his people demanded of their warriors.

As his captors led him toward the village they began to sing, and Spotted Deer knew that they were giving a boastful recital of their exploit. In the meantime a company of men and boys were hurrying forward to meet them. They were followed by a large pack of dogs. The Shawnee leader stationed himself beside the captive. Spotted Deer was astonished when he was addressed in his own dialect.

“Delaware, we have brought you to our village,” the Shawnee told him. “Our people are waiting for you. They are very mad. Perhaps they will kill you.”

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## *The Shawnee Camp*

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Spotted Deer received the threat in silence. The Shawnee studied him closely. He was angered by the scornful smile of the Delaware.

"Have my people frightened away your words?" he demanded, sarcastically.

"I see many dogs," replied Spotted Deer. "A Delaware is not afraid of dogs."

For an instant the Shawnee seemed about to attack him, but at that moment they were surrounded by the company from the village. The Shawnees pushed and jostled wildly in their efforts to reach the prisoner. His captors, however, held them off. The leader called out in commanding tones, and the Shawnees fell back. They seemed frantic with excitement, and Spotted Deer knew that they would show little mercy.

As they moved toward the camp, some of the boys began to taunt and jeer and throw stones and sticks. The dogs, too, were snarling and snapping and skulking between the Shawnees to reach the stranger. One particularly ugly-looking brute rushed forward and attempted to fasten its fangs in Spotted Deer's leg. He kicked savagely and it slunk away.

Once at the edge of the camp, Spotted Deer was made the object of a vicious attack. His guards were swept aside, and men, women and children rushed upon him and began to beat

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## *Spotted Deer*

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him. For some moments he believed he would be killed. Then some one called out loudly from the village, and the attack suddenly ceased.

Three warriors were walking slowly toward the crowd of Shawnees. It was evident at once that they were persons of importance. As they approached, Spotted Deer studied them with great interest. Two were robust men of middle age, and the third seemed considerably older. He wore a bearskin robe, and carried a tomahawk. Spotted Deer believed he was the one who had called out. He wondered if it was the war chief of the Shawnees.

As the three warriors advanced, the Shawnees separated to permit them to reach the prisoner. Spotted Deer had been badly battered by his foes, and the Shawnees laughed indifferently as they saw the evidence of his punishment. There was a bold challenge in his glance, however, that compelled their respect. It was apparent that the youthful warrior had little fear of them. For some moments they studied him in silence. Then the oldest warrior turned and addressed the great company of Shawnees. When he ceased speaking, they entered the village.

The Delaware was taken to the center of the camp. He presented a striking appearance as he walked between his guards with his head erect

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## *The Shawnee Camp*

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and his eyes flashing defiance at his jeering foes. He was led to a large bark lodge, and pushed through the doorway.

Spotted Deer found himself in a good-sized room which was occupied by an old woman, who was busily engaged poking the embers of a small fire. His guards had followed him into the lodge, and at sight of the three intruders the old woman began to scold furiously. Then she suddenly noticed that Spotted Deer was a stranger. She rose, and tottered forward to look at him. In a moment she turned, and questioned her tribesmen. When they replied, her aged face flamed with hate. She rushed at Spotted Deer like some horrible witch who was about to shrivel him with the heat of her wrath. Cackling fiendishly, she thrust her bony, talon-like hands at his eyes. He avoided her, and then sprang forward so menacingly that she drew back shrieking in terror. Then the Shawnees ordered her from the lodge. She turned at the doorway and shook her clenched hand at the captive. A moment afterward they heard her haranguing the crowd that had assembled outside. Spotted Deer believed that she might prove to be a crafty and dangerous foe.

In the meantime one of the Shawnees had motioned for the prisoner to seat himself upon the wide platform of poles that extended along the

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## *Spotted Deer*

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side of the room. Then they bound his ankles, and withdrew.

Left to himself, Spotted Deer began to study the lodge. It was similar in plan and structure to the Delaware lodges. The walls and roof were made of slabs of bark fitted between two rows of poles, and held in place by splints and ropes made of twisted strands of bark. Each slab was punctured at the ends and securely tied in position with bark fibers. The roof, which was somewhat arched, was braced with many small poles and had an opening in the center as an exit for the smoke from the camp fire. The lodge was about five bow-lengths wide and four bow-lengths long. A wide platform of poles extended along each side of the room. The floor was packed earth. There was a shallow fire pit in the center. The lodge was without furnishings, and appeared deserted. Spotted Deer wondered how the old woman had chanced to be there. As there was nothing to indicate that she had been cooking, he believed that she had entered the lodge to burn incense and conduct some mysterious medicine rite. The thought stirred his imagination. He realized that she might be one of the strange Medicine Women. In that event he feared that she might exert a powerful influence against him.

His meditations were interrupted by a noisy

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## *The Shawnee Camp*

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commotion outside. He heard people talking excitedly before the entrance to the lodge. He wondered if the Shawnees were about to attack him. Then, above the confused clamor, he recognized the shrill cackling voice of the mysterious old woman. It was evident that she was still talking against him. A few moments later he saw her peering into the lodge. Many faces appeared behind her. She pointed a long, crooked finger at Spotted Deer, and launched forth into a violent tirade. Her face wore a diabolical expression. She appeared beside herself with rage. Spotted Deer believed she would lead the Shawnees into the lodge to kill him. He was at a loss to understand why the vicious old creature showed such animosity toward him. However, neither she nor the people with her attempted to enter the lodge. In a few moments they withdrew, and Spotted Deer heard them moving toward another part of the camp.

He was left alone until the end of the day. Then the robe was raised from the doorway and several warriors entered the lodge. One was the haughty leader whom Spotted Deer had learned to hate. An old woman followed behind them. She carried a portion of roasted meat and a wooden bowl. For a moment Spotted Deer mistook her for the violent creature who had annoyed him. As she came nearer, he was

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## *Spotted Deer*

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relieved to learn that she was not that ill-tempered individual. She placed the meat and a bowl of water beside him and hurried away. Then one of the warriors freed him. Spotted Deer again found his arms powerless.

"Come, Delaware, eat some meat so that you will be strong when we come to kill you," the Shawnee leader said, threateningly.

"A Delaware is always strong," Spotted Deer replied, boastfully.

"Well, we will see about it," laughed the Shawnee. "There is an old woman out there who is talking bad against you. She is a Mystery Woman. No one knows how she came here. She has been here a long time. She has done some big things. My people will listen to her words. She says the Delawares killed her people. Her heart is black against you. She wants to see you die. It is good."

Spotted Deer remained silent. The threat made little impression upon him. He had already anticipated the fate which the Shawnee prophesied.

"Well, how do you feel about it?" inquired the Shawnee.

The Delaware refused to reply. He was endeavoring to secure the meat and water before his foe became impatient and took them away. After several torturing attempts, he succeeded.

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## *The Shawnee Camp*

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The Shawnees jested laughingly. He knew they were rejoicing at his discomfort. He strove heroically to conceal it, but his arms were stiff and swollen and he found great difficulty in raising the food to his mouth.

"You are a young man, but we will make you old," laughed the Shawnee. "Your arms are already too weak to pull the bow. See how you shake! Are you frightened?"

Sharp words rushed to the lips of Spotted Deer but he kept them back. He realized that an outburst of anger would invite a fresh attack from his foes. As he was completely in their power, he believed it would be folly to antagonize them. He smothered the fierce emotions that raged in his heart, and remained calm. When he had eaten the meat the Shawnees bound his arms, and passed out of the lodge.

Spotted Deer immediately began to think about the Mystery Woman. He wondered if she possessed the strange powers which the Delawares credited to the Medicine People. He had been taught to regard those mysterious people with superstitious fear. The thought that the strange old woman might be one of them caused him considerable uneasiness. Having incurred her hostility, he wondered if she would cast some evil spell upon him. The credulous young Delaware started at the possibility.

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## *Spotted Deer*

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As the long day finally came to an end, Spotted Deer wondered if he would be left unguarded through the night. He heard people laughing and singing in various parts of the camp, and smelled the smoke from their fires. A narrow streak of light showed at the doorway of the lodge. He believed the Shawnees were eating the evening meal. A short time afterward he heard the dogs snarling and fighting over the bones which had been thrown to them.

Then some one went through the camp crying out in a loud voice. Spotted Deer knew that it was a courier calling the people to assemble for some particular event. He heard them passing the lodge. The streak of light at the side of the doorway grew wider. It was evident that a large fire had been lighted close by. He heard the crackle of the flames. Soon afterward some one began to speak. Spotted Deer listened closely. He felt quite certain that he recognized the voice of the Shawnee leader. He talked some time, and when he finished speaking, a great shout went up from the company. His words seemed to have found approval. Spotted Deer wondered if he had been the subject of his discourse. Other speakers followed. Then, after a short interval of silence, the shrill voice of the Mystery Woman echoed through the camp. It filled Spotted Deer with a vague, su-

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## *The Shawnee Camp*

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perstitious fear. She spoke in a wild, hysterical manner, and it was not long before he heard sounds which led him to believe that she was rousing the Shawnees against him. When she finally subsided, the night rang with their shouts. Spotted Deer was filled with gloomy premonitions of impending disaster.

When the tumult finally ceased, the night was far spent. Then some one entered the lodge. Spotted Deer stared anxiously toward the doorway. The impenetrable darkness concealed his visitor. The latter approached without making a sound. In a few moments Spotted Deer felt a hand upon his shoulder. It passed down his arm and stopped at his wrists. Having made sure that the binding was secure, his unseen foe then examined the thongs about his ankles. Then he withdrew as noiselessly as he had approached. Spotted Deer wondered if he had gone out. Some time afterward he thought he heard a sigh near the doorway of the lodge. He believed some one was on guard.

## CHAPTER VI

### A TRYING ORDEAL

**A**T dawn Spotted Deer looked anxiously about the lodge, hoping to see the mysterious visitor who had entered during the night. He had disappeared. The Delaware was alone.

The camp was astir with the usual daylight activities. Spotted Deer recognized familiar sounds. People were calling from the lodges. Children were running about in play. The women were breaking sticks for the fires. He heard the crackle of freshly kindled wood. Smoke drifted into the lodge. Soon afterward he smelled the tantalizing odor of roasting meat. It roused his appetite. He wondered if the Shawnees would bring food.

It was not long before a warrior and an old woman entered the lodge. The warrior carried his tomahawk and the old woman brought meat and water. The Shawnee unbound the Delaware in grim silence. Then he motioned for the woman to place the meat and water beside the

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## *A Trying Ordeal*

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captive. He seated himself to wait while Spotted Deer ate. The old woman stood watching him. The Shawnee pointed toward the door and she hurried out.

It was some time before Spotted Deer could use his arms. The Shawnee showed no impatience. He seemed content to enjoy the discomfort of his foe. He was a young man, not much older than the Delaware. His face was stern and cruel, and his eyes were bold and piercing. He was sinewy and well formed, and looked as if he might be a dangerous adversary. He waited silently until Spotted Deer had finished eating, and then he bound him. Then he called the old woman who came and took away the bowl. The Shawnee followed her from the lodge.

As he was not further disturbed, Spotted Deer began to consider his chances. He wondered if the Shawnees intended to kill him. He had little doubt of it. The Mystery Woman wished to see him die, and the Shawnee leader had declared that his people would listen to her words. Spotted Deer had slight hope of being spared. He knew the hatred which the Shawnees had for the Delawares and he believed he would be made the victim of their vengeance. Still he had passed safely through many perilous days of captivity among the fierce Mohawks, and the

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## *Spotted Deer*

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thought gave him courage. If the Shawnees delayed his execution, he believed his friends might discover his plight in time to rescue him. He relied particularly upon his friend Running Fox, a famous young warrior who was the son of the great Delaware war chief, Black Panther. The lads had shared many perilous adventures and each had implicit confidence in the loyalty and ability of the other. Spotted Deer felt sure that, once alarmed at his absence, Running Fox would make desperate efforts to find him. If he finally learned of Spotted Deer's predicament, the latter knew that nothing but death would prevent him from extricating him from his difficulty.

"Running Fox will come," he assured himself.

Then he suddenly realized that, even if his friends should find his trail, they might arrive too late to save him. The thought sobered him. He feared that if the Shawnees planned to kill him they would carry out their intention with little delay. They, too, might anticipate an attempt by the Delawares to rescue him. He realized that the coming night might bring his death. For an instant the idea startled him. Then he drove it from his thoughts, and made an earnest appeal to Getanittowit, the Great One.

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## *A Trying Ordeal*

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Getanittowit, see what has happened to me;  
See, Getanittowit, the Shawnees have caught me.  
Great Getanittowit, take pity on me.  
Getanittowit, tell my people about it;  
Getanittowit, bring them here to help me.  
Great Getanittowit, take pity on me.

He had barely finished his petition when the Shawnee leader entered the lodge. For some moments he stood before Spotted Deer in silence. He stared steadily into his eyes, and the Delaware met his glance without flinching. Then the Shawnee began to speak.

"Delaware, I have come to tell you that you must die," he said.

He paused to note the effect of his words. Spotted Deer showed no emotion. He waited calmly for the Shawnee to continue. It was some moments before the latter spoke.

"Many bad things will happen to you," he said, finally. "Pretty soon we will see if you are brave enough to go through with it. I do not believe you are brave enough to go through with it. You are a Delaware. When you see what the Shawnees are about to do to you I believe you will cry like a woman. Then our young men will laugh at you."

The Shawnee again paused and looked searchingly at the captive. Spotted Deer smiled scornfully. He showed no inclination to speak.

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## *Spotted Deer*

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His control amazed his foe. He had expected to rouse him into a violent outburst of temper. He appeared baffled by Spotted Deer's indifference. It annoyed him. His anger showed in his face. Having failed to intimidate the young Delaware, the Shawnee appeared to be in a dilemma. Spotted Deer believed he had entered the lodge to carry out some crafty plan. For some moments he maintained an awkward silence. The Delaware watched closely. He saw a swift, cunning glance flash from the eyes of his foe. At that instant the Shawnee addressed him.

"Well, young man, I see that you are brave," he said, less harshly. "It is good. Perhaps I will help you. But you must do as I tell you. Will you listen to my words?"

"Speak," Spotted Deer said, coldly.

"You are a Delaware," resumed the Shawnee. "Your people are our enemies. Our enemies must die. If I do not help you my people will surely kill you. You are a young man. I believe you are a brave warrior. It would be foolish to throw away your life. I will tell you how you may keep it. You must help me kill the great chief Black Panther. He is——"

"Stop!" Spotted Deer cried, furiously. "I have closed my ears. You speak the tongue of my people, but you talk like a Shawnee. The

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## *A Trying Ordeal*

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Shawnees are afraid of our great chief, Black Panther. It is good. They run to their lodges when they hear his voice. You wish to kill him but you are afraid. You ask me to help you. Shawnee, if my hands were loose I would pull you to pieces. I am a Delaware. A Delaware will die for his people. Go, Shawnee dog, and tell your brothers the words of Spotted Deer."

The Shawnee listened in dumbfounded amazement as the enraged young Delaware defied him. As Spotted Deer finished speaking, however, his foe suddenly gave way to passion. Springing wildly upon the helpless captive, the Shawnee began to choke him. Spotted Deer was entirely at his mercy. The Shawnee seemed determined to kill him. He slowly increased the power of his grip, and Spotted Deer began to strangle. The Shawnee laughed fiercely as he stared upon the distorted features of his victim. Then, when the tortured Delaware finally began to lose consciousness, the Shawnee suddenly released him.

"No, I will not kill you," he said. "It would be foolish. I will take you to my people. I will give them your words. Then you will see how the Shawnees kill their enemies."

He watched indifferently until he saw Spotted Deer recovering from the attack, and then he left the lodge. For some time afterward

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## *Spotted Deer*

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Spotted Deer gasped and choked in his efforts to recover his breath. Then he composed himself to think. He feared that his bold defiance would cost him his life. He believed that the Shawnee had spared him to receive a worse fate from his tribesmen. Spotted Deer knew only too well the sort of vengeance the Shawnees would inflict upon him.

"I am a Delaware—I must be brave," he kept telling himself.

Spotted Deer abandoned hope. It was evident that if his friends came, they would arrive too late to save him. He felt sure that the night would bring his death. He knew that the Shawnees would do their utmost to make him suffer, in the hope of breaking his spirit and making him die a weakling in their eyes. The thought roused his spirit. His eyes flashed excitedly, as he told himself that it was his duty to uphold the honor of his people. The thought fired him with enthusiasm. He resolved to die as the Delawares would wish him to die.

"The Shawnees will see a warrior," he said, proudly.

Then his thoughts turned to Running Fox. The lads had been inseparable companions and Spotted Deer grieved at the thought of leaving him. It was the first peril he had faced without the companionship of his friend. He took com-

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## *A Trying Ordeal*

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fort, however, in the thought that Running Fox would avenge him. Spotted Deer was entirely familiar with the grim determination and dogged courage of that fiery-tempered young warrior, and he knew that the Shawnees would be made to pay dearly for what they were about to do.

As the long day finally drew toward its end, Spotted Deer heard sounds which confirmed his fears. The village hummed with activity. It was evident that the Shawnees were preparing for some unusual event. He saw the glow from a great fire in the center of the village. The Shawnees were shouting and laughing and singing their war songs. He heard them passing the lodge and calling to him as they went by. Then the robe was lifted from the doorway, and the diabolical old Mystery Woman peered into the lodge. She shook her finger at him and laughed shrilly. Her voice carried a threat of impending disaster, and Spotted Deer was relieved when she passed on. Other Shawnees drew aside the robe and looked into the lodge. Some stared in silence, others cried out threateningly. Then they, too, hurried away.

A few moments afterward Spotted Deer heard some one talking loudly near the center of the camp. The Shawnees had become quiet. When the speaker finished, however, they raised their

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## *Spotted Deer*

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voices in a wild shout that carried a sinister warning to the helpless young captive. He realized that his ordeal was at hand. There was no way of escape. He was resigned. He turned to Getanittowit, the Great One, for strength to defy his foes and uphold the honor of his people.

O Getanittowit, I am about to die.  
See, Getanittowit, I am not afraid.  
Getanittowit, make me strong.  
Getanittowit, make me brave.  
Getanittowit, take pity on me.  
O Getanittowit, help me.

Soon afterward Spotted Deer heard some one approaching the lodge. He realized that the Shawnees were coming for him. He nerved himself to meet the emergency. The Shawnee leader and another warrior entered the lodge.

"Delaware, we have come to take you to our people," the leader told him. "You must get ready to die."

Spotted Deer showed no emotion. He remained silent as the Shawnees unbound his feet. For some moments, however, he found it difficult to stand. The effort caused him great agony. The Shawnees were impatient. The leader seized him and pushed him forward.

"Come, have we frightened you so that you cannot walk?" he asked, mockingly.

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## *A Trying Ordeal*

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Spotted Deer rallied at the challenge. He staggered unsteadily toward the doorway of the lodge. Fearing a trick, the Shawnees sprang after him. They seized him and led him outside.

The village was brightly illuminated by the glow from a large fire in the center of the camp. About it was gathered a great company of Shawnees. The appearance of the prisoner threw them into a frenzy of excitement. As he was led forward by his guards the Shawnees began to shout and laugh and shake their weapons. They made it plain that he might expect no mercy.

Spotted Deer was bound to a heavy log that had been set up a short distance from the fire. Then the warrior who had interfered in the attack at the edge of the camp came toward him. He was accompanied by the leader of the scouts and several other warriors. The Shawnees suddenly grew quiet as these men approached the captive. The oldest warrior addressed Spotted Deer in the Delaware dialect.

"You are a young man, but you are a Delaware," he said. "The Delawares are our enemies. The Shawnees kill their enemies. You must die. You have spoken big words. Now we will see how brave you are."

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*Spotted Deer*

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He turned and spoke briefly to his tribesmen. A company of warriors came forward and formed a circle about the Delaware. They carried their weapons and were painted for war. The Shawnees greeted them with shouts of approval. For a few moments they stood, glaring fiercely at the prisoner. Then they began to move slowly about the fire, stepping in time with the rhythm of a slow, mournful chant.

It was a weird and fascinating scene: the great fire roaring and crackling and sending its sparks high up into the night; the vast assemblage of Shawnees with their fierce, eager faces, like wolves gathered about a stricken deer; the circle of half-naked warriors moving slowly about their foe in the prelude to the grim ceremony that would follow. And, most interesting of all, the youthful prisoner, bound and helpless, waiting calmly for torture and death at the hands of his enemies.

For some moments the dancers continued their slow, sinister parade about the captive. They made no attempt to attack him, but appeared to be endeavoring to impress him with their grim earnestness. The solemn, dirgelike chant was taken up by the entire company, and Spotted Deer believed that the Shawnees were singing the death song. Then one of the war-

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## *A Trying Ordeal*

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riors, who seemed to be a leader, suddenly straightened and raised a piercing yell that reverberated wildly through the camp. It broke the solemnity of the ceremony and roused the dancers to action.

A moment afterward they began capering frantically about Spotted Deer, shouting and jeering and flourishing their weapons. The Shawnees urged them on with yells of approval, and the entire assemblage was soon in an uproar. Once aroused, the dancers soon began to threaten and attack their prisoner. They swung their war clubs about his head, aimed their arrows at his heart and made close, dangerous passes with their knives. Some rushed forward and struck him in the face.

Spotted Deer faced the ordeal without a tremor. His heart was filled with a fierce resolve to uphold the traditional courage of his people, and he was determined to remain strong to the end. He waited, therefore, with head erect and eyes flashing, for the punishment which he felt sure would soon be inflicted upon him. The Shawnees appeared to be rousing themselves into a fury. Encouraged by the shouts of the spectators, the dancers had thrown off restraint and abandoned themselves to the mad antics of the war dance. They made every effort to intimidate the unfortunate young war-

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*Spotted Deer*

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rior who had fallen into their hands. Some rushed toward him and drove their tomahawks into the post close beside him. Others shot their arrows within a hand-width of his body. Several seized him by the scalp-lock and swept their knives about his head. Spotted Deer, however, showed no fear.

Then above the tumult he suddenly heard the shrill, ominous laugh of the villainous old Mystery Woman. A moment afterward she tottered forward into the firelight, and pointed excitedly toward the captive. As she stood revealed in the lurid glow from the flames her appearance was startling. Her frail, bowed form was covered with an old deerskin robe. Her white, unkempt hair fell loosely about her shoulders. Her aged features were distorted in a fiendish grin, and her small, ferretlike eyes glowed threateningly from their deep cavities beneath her shaggy brows. She looked like an evil demon whom the fire had drawn from concealment in the black depths of the night. The Shawnees watched her in silent, superstitious awe. Spotted Deer felt his courage falter as the fearsome old creature confronted him.

In a few moments she turned and addressed the four warriors who stood apart from the rest of the Shawnees. As they made no attempt to stop her, Spotted Deer believed that they were

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## *A Trying Ordeal*

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eager to hear her words. He had little doubt that she was talking against him. When she finally finished her excited harangue, one of the warriors called to the dancers. They immediately ceased their exertions and stood quietly in their places. Then the warrior whom Spotted Deer believed to be the Shawnee chief made a brief talk. The Shawnees seemed to approve his words.

In a few moments Spotted Deer saw preparations which enabled him to guess the sort of punishment which the Mystery Woman had suggested for him. The great company of Shawnees suddenly broke up, and the women and old men and some of the boys hurried to the lodges. The old Mystery Woman hobbled away, cackling gleefully. It was not long before Spotted Deer saw his suspicions confirmed. Those who had disappeared were returning with sticks and stout willow switches and small whips with rawhide lashes. They were laughing and calling out in joyful anticipation of their attack upon the prisoner. Behind them followed the Mystery Woman. She, too, carried a willow wand and Spotted Deer felt sure she would make savage use of it.

In the meantime the warriors jeered and threatened but made no further attempts to in-

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## *Spotted Deer*

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jure him. Spotted Deer believed they were restrained by the man whom he took for the war chief. The latter called out sharply whenever one of the younger warriors showed an inclination to attack the captive, and each time his command was obeyed. Spotted Deer realized, however, that the respite was only temporary. He believed that his foes were simply delaying his torture and death to give the fierce old Mystery Woman an opportunity for vengeance.

The women and old men and boys had formed in two long lines about two bow-lengths apart. They were singing and shouting and shaking their sticks at the captive. Then a warrior freed Spotted Deer from the stake. A moment afterward he was led forward to receive his punishment. Spotted Deer realized exactly what was about to happen. He knew that he would be compelled to make his way along the narrow lane between his foes who would beat him as he passed. As his arms were bound behind him he was powerless to defend himself against the attack. He realized that he might lessen his punishment by dashing wildly along the course, but his spirit rebelled at the thought. He feared that the maneuver would make him appear frightened and weak in the eyes of his foes.

“Delaware, run!” cried the Shawnee leader,

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## *A Trying Ordeal*

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as he pushed Spotted Deer between the lines of excited Shawnees.

Spotted Deer ignored the command. For an instant only he hesitated while he looked calmly along the rows of fierce, eager faces. One in particular stood out in contrast with the others. It was the evil, grinning face of the old Mystery Woman who stood at the end of the line. As Spotted Deer began the perilous journey between the lines, he heard her shrill, harsh voice rising threateningly above the tumult.

The Shawnees were astounded when the Delaware started forward at a slow walk. For an instant the unexpected maneuver baffled and confused them. They wondered if fear had suddenly driven the power from his limbs. Having expected him to make a wild dash for the end of the lines they could think of nothing but fright as the reason for his strange action. They began to laugh and jeer as they struck him about the head and shoulders with their whips.

"Come, come, make the frightened Delaware run!" they cried.

Then they suddenly realized the significance of his conduct. They saw that the Delaware was defying them. The realization drove them into a fury. Weak and aged arms grew strong with emotion, and Spotted Deer staggered beneath the violence of the attack. Some of the women

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## *Spotted Deer*

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jabbed viciously at his eyes with their sticks. Some of the infuriated old men kicked savagely at his legs. The boys beat him with their fists. All struck him about the face and head with their sticks. By the time he had covered half of the course he was suffering from many cuts and bruises. It was evident that unless he hastened, he was threatened with serious injury or even death. Still he refused to save himself by running. He preferred to die rather than give the Shawnees an opportunity to boast that a Delaware had run from their women and old men.

When Spotted Deer finally reached the end of the course, he was attacked by the Mystery Woman. Throwing away her stick, she rushed upon him and thumped him about the body with her fists. Her frail old arms lacked strength, and her blows did little damage. Then, as several warriors seized the Delaware and prepared to take him away, the Mystery Woman drew a knife from her belt and attempted to reach the captive. The Shawnees intercepted her and led Spotted Deer away.

He was greatly surprised when they took him to the lodge instead of the stake. The Shawnees followed close behind him, shouting wildly and threatening to overwhelm his guards and put him to death. He reached the lodge in safety,

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*A Trying Ordeal*

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however, and was pushed through the doorway. Then he heard the warrior who seemed to be the chief talking to the people. Was he attempting to pacify them? Spotted Deer listened anxiously. He heard the Shawnees moving away. He believed that for the moment at least he was safe.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE MYSTERY WOMAN

WHEN the Shawnees had dispersed, two warriors entered the lodge. They bound Spotted Deer's ankles, and then they seated themselves near the doorway. Spotted Deer believed they intended to remain on guard through the balance of the night. For some time he heard them talking. Then they became quiet. He wondered if they had gone out. The fire in the camp had died down. The lodge was dark. He was unable to see them. He listened anxiously to learn what he wished to know. Then, as he heard nothing to indicate that the guards were still in the lodge, he relaxed upon the platform of poles and tried to sleep. It was useless. He had been severely beaten by the Shawnees, and his face and head ached and throbbed from the cuts and bruises. The lodge was cold and drafty, and as he was without a robe he began to shiver violently. Each moment increased his discomfort, and he wondered if the Shawnees had spared him to

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## *The Mystery Woman*

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prolong his agony. At last, however, exhaustion brought relief and he fell into a light, restless slumber.

Then he suddenly awakened and sat up to listen. He heard soft, stealthy footfalls near the doorway. The lodge was dimly lighted by a narrow streak of moonlight that had entered through the smoke hole in the roof. Spotted Deer watched closely. In a few moments he saw some one enter the lodge. Then as the huddled figure hobbled toward him, he recognized the bowed form of the Mystery Woman. The discovery filled him with superstitious fear. He believed she had come to kill him. As she came closer he saw that she carried a bowl. He wondered if it contained a strange medicine potion. Perhaps she planned to cast some evil spell upon him. The thought was alarming.

The Mystery Woman came directly to him. For a moment or so she stared wildly into his face. Then she spoke. Spotted Deer could scarcely believe what he heard. She was addressing him in the Delaware tongue.

“My son, do not be afraid, I have come to help you,” she said.

For some moments Spotted Deer looked at her in astonishment. Then he recovered himself and sought to conceal his emotion. Her words had made him suspicious. He recalled

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## *Spotted Deer*

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the deceitful offer of the Shawnee leader. He feared that she, too, was attempting to deceive him with some clever bit of treachery. Perhaps she hoped to gain information about his people. He determined to be on his guard.

In the meantime the Mystery Woman was watching him closely. Her face betrayed impatience. It was evident that his silence annoyed her.

"Have you no tongue?" she asked, sharply.

Spotted Deer still remained silent. He believed that he was confronted by a crafty and dangerous foe, and he realized that he must be cautious. His inherited dread of the strange Medicine People made him doubly suspicious of the mysterious old creature who addressed him.

"You say you are a Delaware," she said, angrily. "I have spoken Delaware words. I see that you do not know them. I do not believe you are a Delaware."

There was something in her tone that conveyed a warning. Spotted Deer suddenly realized that it might be fatal to rouse her anger. He believed that it would be wise to hear what she wished to say. He decided to speak.

"A Delaware keeps his words for his friends," he said.

"Hi, now I see that you are one of my people," the old woman whispered, excitedly.

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## *The Mystery Woman*

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Spotted Deer started at her words. For an instant they filled him with hope. Then he realized that the wily old Mystery Woman was attempting to deceive him and quiet his suspicions. He determined to match wits with her.

"You are a Shawnee," he said, contemptuously.

She went close and glared fiercely into his face. Her expression startled him. Her features were quivering with emotion. Hate blazed from her eyes. Her breath came in quick, sobbing gasps. She seemed to be struggling against the impulse to kill him. It was some time before she could speak.

"Those are bad words," she said, savagely. "I will shake them from my ears. I have come here to help you. There is little time. You must believe what I am about to tell you. Listen, my son, to the words of a Delaware."

Spotted Deer was impressed. There was an earnestness in her tone that was convincing. Impulse urged him to believe her. Caution, however, kept him suspicious. He still feared treachery.

"I will listen," he told her.

"It is good," declared the Mystery Woman.  
"Now I will try to help you."

She placed the bowl beside him and moved to

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## *Spotted Deer*

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the front of the lodge. She drew aside the robe and peered outside. In a few moments she returned to Spotted Deer.

"There is no one there," she told him. "The camp is still. Now I am going to do something good for you."

"If you are a Delaware, untie me and let me get away," said Spotted Deer.

"No, no, that would be foolish," she declared. "If I untie you perhaps some one will come in and find out about it. Then both of us will be killed. Anyway you could not get away. The Shawnees are afraid that your people are coming to help you. Scouts are watching around the edge of the camp."

Spotted Deer continued silent. He was unable to decide whether the old Mystery Woman was telling the truth or simply attempting to win his confidence. In either event he was eager to learn her plans. She had seated herself beside him, and was dipping a piece of buckskin in the bowl. Spotted Deer watched her with considerable uneasiness. Then as she began to bathe his face and head, his suspicions suddenly vanished and a great hope entered his heart.

"Come, old woman, if you are a Delaware tell me where you came from," he said, eagerly.

"I am a Minsi," she said, quietly.

"Those people are my brothers," he told her.

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## *The Mystery Woman*

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"I have been to their village. Your words are good. Tell me something more."

"Have you seen the great chief Big Hawk, and Black Rabbit the mysterious Medicine Person?" she asked.

"Yes, yes, I have talked with those people," Spotted Deer assured her, excitedly.

"Have you seen the great rock that stands behind the village? Have you heard how Leaping Dog killed four bears?"

"Yes, yes, I know about those things," said Spotted Deer.

"Well, then, I will tell you that I am White Crane. Leaping Dog was my father."

"Woman, I believe your words," Spotted Deer told her. "Now I know that you are a Delaware. Tell me how you come to be here."

"I cannot give you many words," she told him. "The night is almost gone. Pretty soon the Shawnees will begin to move around. If they find me here it will be bad. I will talk fast. You must listen sharp."

"Friend, my ears are open," said Spotted Deer.

"My son, a long time ago I went into the hills with my mother to pick berries. We were quite a ways from our village. While we were picking berries we heard a great shout behind us. Then my mother seized me and began to run.

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## *Spotted Deer*

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We saw some warriors chasing us. Pretty soon they came up with us. I was frightened and I began to cry. One of those warriors seized me. My poor mother drew a small knife and plunged it into him. Then one of his friends knocked her on the head with his war club and she fell into the bushes. I never saw her again.

“Those warriors took me a long ways. We traveled many days. I got very tired but I kept going. I did not know those people but I hated them because they had killed my mother. Well, my son, one night when they were sleeping I crawled away. The woods were very black and I was afraid, but I kept going. After a long time I heard a dog barking. That frightened me. I did not know what to do. Then I said, ‘Perhaps there is a village over there. Perhaps some good people live there. Perhaps they will take pity on me and give me something to eat and a place to sleep in.’

“I went that way. Pretty soon I saw some lodges. I was greatly frightened. My legs began to shake. I listened sharp. I did not hear any one. Then I went nearer. Pretty soon I entered the village. It was dark and still. I kept very quiet. Then I saw some little red lights from a fire. I went over and sat down in that place.

“When the light came, an old woman came

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## *The Mystery Woman*

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out of a lodge and saw me. She began to talk very fast, but I did not know her words. Then she called her people. They came running from the lodges. When they saw me sitting by the fire, they did not know what to make of it. They were shaking their heads and talking and pointing toward the sky. Then I knew that they took me for a Medicine Person. It made me feel good. I knew they would not harm me.

"My son, that is how I came here. I have been here a long, long time. Now I am an old woman. I have never talked our tongue. The Shawnees have never harmed me. They call me the Mystery Woman. They listen to my words. Getanittowit has helped me. I have done some big things. Perhaps I can save you."

"Who were those people who carried you away?" inquired Spotted Deer.

"I believe they were Mohawks," she told him. "I know those people came into our country before this thing happened to me."

As she ceased speaking, they heard something moving outside the lodge. They listened in breathless suspense. Then the old woman seized the bowl and hurried toward the door. Spotted Deer saw her draw aside the robe. He believed she was listening. Long, anxious moments passed. He wondered if she had left him. Then he saw her. She was crouching in the

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## *Spotted Deer*

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doorway. In a few moments she rose and came to him.

"It was a dog," she said.

Spotted Deer nodded understandingly.

"It is almost light," she told him. "Pretty soon I must go away. But first I must tell you something. My son, when I saw you I asked about you. When I heard that you were a Delaware, my heart grew big for you. Then I fooled the Shawnees. You saw what I did. It was the only way to save you. They believe I wish to kill you. It is good. They will listen to my words. I will try to save you. It will be a hard thing to do."

"Now I will tell you about it. The warrior who brought you here is Walking Bear. He is a great war leader. He is very mad at your people. He says the great chief Black Panther killed his brother. He says that he has killed many Delawares. He says that you must die. That old man who talked to you is Howling Wolf. He is a great Medicine Person. Now you know about those people."

"Who is the chief?" Spotted Deer asked, eagerly.

"Big Dog is the chief."

"Where is he?"

"He is away on the hunt. That is why the Shawnees did not kill you. I told them Red Dog

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## *The Mystery Woman*

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would be very mad about it. I told them they must wait until he comes. They listened to my words. That is how you come to be alive. But, my son, the Shawnees will surely kill you when Big Dog comes back."

"When will he come?" inquired Spotted Deer.

"Before three suns pass," the Mystery Woman said, solemnly. "If I do not get you away before that time you must prepare to die. I will try hard to save you. No matter what I do you must know that I am trying to help you. Now I am going away."

"You are a good friend," Spotted Deer said, gratefully. "If I get away I will take you to your people."

"No, no, you must not try to do that," she told him. "It would be useless. I am old and feeble. I cannot travel. I would hold you back. The Shawnees would catch us. You must go alone. I will stay here and die in the Shawnee village. If you get away you can tell my people about me."

A moment later she hurried from the lodge. Spotted Deer realized that he had found a crafty ally. He wondered if she would be able to save him. He feared to hope. He knew that the Shawnee chief might return at any moment, and then the Mystery Woman would be powerless.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE ALARM

THE long, silent night was slowly merging into dawn when the Delawares were suddenly awakened by a piercing shout from the center of the camp. Thoroughly alarmed, they rushed from the lodges, weapons in hand, expecting to find themselves beset by foes. Instead they found Dancing Owl, a young warrior who had left the village the previous day to hunt.

"Well, young man, what has happened?" inquired Black Panther, the famous Delaware war chief.

"The Mohawks are on the river," Dancing Owl told him.

The announcement threw the Delawares into a frenzy of excitement. They feared that their fierce foes from the north were about to attack the village.

"Where are they?" Black Panther asked, anxiously.

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## *The Alarm*

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"I saw them a sun's travel up the river," declared Dancing Owl.

The Delawares felt relieved. They realized that there was at least time to prepare for defense. They crowded eagerly about Dancing Owl and began to question him. Then Black Panther asked them to assemble at the council lodge to hear the words of Dancing Owl.

"Come, Dancing Owl, tell us about this thing," said Black Panther, when they had seated themselves.

"Well, my friends, I hunted hard but I did not kill any game," said Dancing Owl. "I kept going along the river until it got dark. Then I sat down to rest. Pretty soon I heard the cry of fierce Nianque, the lynx. I listened sharp. After a long time I heard it again. It was up the river. I went ahead. I went a long ways. Then I saw a great light. I heard some one shouting. That made me cautious. I waited a long time. Then I heard some more shouts. Then I went ahead very slow. I kept looking ahead. Pretty soon I saw two big fires. There was one on each side of the river. Then I stopped. I did not know what to make of it. I kept watching. Pretty soon I saw some warriors moving around one of those fires. They were on the other side of the river. They were far off. I could not tell about them. Then they

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*Spotted Deer*

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went away. Pretty soon some of them came back. They knocked away the fire. Then I could not see them.

"Well, my friends, I kept watching. I said, 'Those people will cross the water and knock away the other fire. I will creep up close and see who they are.' Then I went ahead. I was very cautious. The fire kept burning. I was looking for those people on the water. I did not see them. Then I heard Woakus, the fox. It was close ahead of me. It did not sound good. I listened sharp. Pretty soon I heard it again. Then I said, 'Some one is making that noise.' I kept watching the fire. It made a big light. I kept around the edge of it. Then I heard some one moving in the bushes. He was close. I got ready to fight. Then I saw that person at the edge of the light. He was a Mohawk. Then he went away.

"I watched a long time. Then I heard the call of Gokhos, the owl. It was the call of the big night bird with the ears. I knew it was the Mohawks. It was on the other side of the water. Pretty soon I heard it again. It was on the side of the water where I was. I kept watching. The fire was going down. The light closed up. I went nearer. I heard some people talking. Pretty soon I saw five canoes. They came across the water. I saw two Mohawks in every

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## *The Alarm*

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one of those canoes. Then I saw another canoe. It was near the edge of the woods. Pretty soon two Mohawks got into it. Then they all paddled up the river. I waited a long time. Then the fire died out. I heard a great shout. I was far up the river. I knew it was the Mohawks. Then I hurried away and came here. Now I have told you all I know about it."

The Delawares remained silent for some moments after Dancing Owl had finished his story. It baffled them. They were at a loss to account for such unusual recklessness on the part of the Mohawks. They could scarcely believe that those crafty foes would dare to proclaim their presence so near the Delaware camp. They could think of no reason for the two great fires along the river. They feared it was part of some clever stratagem.

"Dancing Owl, I have listened to your words," Black Panther said, finally. "This thing is mysterious. I cannot tell what to make of it. Now I am going to ask you something."

"I am listening," Dancing Owl told him.

"You came back along the river," said Black Panther. "Your eyes are sharp. Did you see anything?"

"No, I did not find any signs," declared Dancing Owl. "I kept watching for the Mo-

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## *Spotted Deer*

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hawks but I did not see them. I believe they went the other way."

"Well, my friends, I cannot tell what to make of it," acknowledged Black Panther. "Only a foolish person makes a big fire to tell his enemies where to find him. The Mohawks are not foolish. They are as sly as Woakus, the fox. I cannot tell why they made those big fires. It is mysterious. I believe something bad will come of it. Come, Sky Dog, you are a great Medicine Person, perhaps you can tell us about it."

Sky Dog, the aged Delaware Medicine Man, rose to his feet in obedience to the command of his chief. He was a picturesque figure as he stood in the center of the great circle of Delawares who were looking questioningly into his face. He had wrapped himself in a heavy wolf-skin robe for protection from the sharp autumn air, and his white hair showed beneath the edges of a great beaver-skin cap. For some moments he faced his tribesmen in silence. Then he began to speak.

"My people, you have heard the words of Dancing Owl," he said. "This thing he tells about is mysterious. I cannot make anything of those great fires. I will go away and think about it. Then perhaps I will tell you something."

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## *The Alarm*

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It was evident that the Delawares were disappointed. They had implicit faith in the ability of the old Medicine Man, and they had hoped that he would be able to tell them the significance of the fires. However, as he, too, seemed perplexed and bewildered by the audacity of the Mohawks, the Delawares saw little chance of arriving at an early solution of the mystery.

"My brothers, as we do not know why the Mohawks did this thing, and there is no use of talking about it like a lot of foolish old women," Black Panther told them. "We know that the Mohawks were close to our village. Dancing Owl saw them. He says those Mohawks went up the river. Perhaps they will come back. We must keep a sharp watch. I believe they are trying to fool us. Perhaps they are scouts. Perhaps there is a big war party hiding in the woods. Perhaps the scouts made those fires to draw our warriors up the river. Then it would be easy for the war party to get into the camp. We must be cautious."

His words raised the suspicions of his tribesmen. They believed he had guessed the plans of their foes. The idea roused them. They began to discuss the possibilities. Some of the younger and more impulsive warriors were eager to organize a war party and go out to

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## *Spotted Deer*

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search the woods. Most of the older men counseled against it.

"No, it would be foolish to do that until we know about this thing," said Yellow Wolf, a famous veteran of the war trail. "We must send out scouts to find out if the Mohawks are in the woods. Then we will know what to do."

"Yes, yes, that is the best thing to do," the Delawares told one another.

There was one, however, who took no part in the discussion. He was Running Fox, the son of Black Panther, and the most famous of all the Delaware warriors. Although but a youth, his daring exploits had made him the idol of his people. Two years previous, accompanied by his friend Spotted Deer, he had gone to the Mohawk camp and successfully escaped with the great Mohawk medicine trophy. When the famous Mohawk chief, Standing Wolf, led a great war company into the Delaware village to recapture the token, Running Fox killed him, and drove the Mohawks from the camp. The following year, he and Spotted Deer journeyed into the north and killed the mysterious White Wolf, which the Delawares believed brought famine and pestilence upon them. That achievement convinced the Delawares that Running Fox had received the mysterious powers of a Medicine Person. In spite of his youth, there-

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## *The Alarm*

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fore, they looked upon him as one able to lead and counsel, and they were eager for his opinion concerning the Mohawks and their fires.

“Running Fox, Running Fox!” they cried.

Running Fox rose in response to their cries. He was tall and sinewy, with an alert face and bold, flashing eyes. He possessed the quiet, forceful dignity of his father, and the Delawares looked upon him with pride and affection.

“My friends, you have asked me to talk to you,” said Running Fox. “I have listened to the words of Dancing Owl. I do not believe we are in any danger. I do not believe those Mohawks will come any closer. I do not know what to make of those great fires. I am not thinking about them. I am thinking about my brother, Spotted Deer. I believe he is in great danger. My heart is heavy. Perhaps those Mohawks have carried him away. Perhaps they have killed him. It is bad. I do not like to talk about it.”

As Running Fox finished speaking a gloomy silence fell upon the Delawares. His words had carried an ominous warning. The Delawares suddenly realized the peril which threatened Spotted Deer. He had left the village some days previous on a hunting expedition to a lake several day’s journey to the northward where he hoped to kill a bear. He had expected to re-

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## *Spotted Deer*

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turn at the end of six days. The seventh day had just dawned. Spotted Deer had failed to arrive. The Mohawks were on the river. Startling possibilities flashed into the minds of the Delawares.

"My son, what you say is true," declared Black Panther. "I believe Spotted Deer is in danger. He has not come back. It is bad. If he does not come before this sun passes, we must go to find him."

"My father, I will not wait," Running Fox told him. "Spotted Deer is my friend. We have done many big things together. If the Mohawks have caught him it would be foolish to wait. We must come up with them before they reach their village. If they take him to the camp he will surely be killed. I am going to find him."

"Yes, yes, it is the best thing to do," agreed old Sky Dog, the Medicine Man. "I saw this thing in a dream. I did not wish to talk about it. Now I see what it meant. You must go, Running Fox. Do not lose any time. Keep going until you come in sight of the Mohawks. I believe you will find Spotted Deer."

Running Fox was immediately besieged by a host of eager volunteers who wished to accompany him. Most of the active warriors of the tribe desired to go. He found it hard to refuse

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## *The Alarm*

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them, for all wished to prove their loyalty for Spotted Deer. Running Fox realized, however, that a large company would be less likely to succeed than a few picked scouts moving swiftly on the trail.

"My friends, I see that you all wish to help Spotted Deer," he said. "It is good. It makes me feel big. But I must tell you that it would be foolish. Perhaps what Black Panther says is true. Perhaps many Mohawks are hiding in the woods. Most of you must stay behind to guard the village. A few of us will go to find Spotted Deer. I will be the leader. I will ask Dancing Owl, and Yellow Wolf, and Painted Hawk, and Crooked Foot, and Turning Eagle to go with me. It is enough. Now, my friends, go to your lodges and get ready to go away."

"Wait!" shouted old Sky Dog. "You are going into great danger. If I do not help you, something bad may happen. You must all come to my lodge, and I will make a smoke to Geta-nittowit and ask him to help you."

"It is good," said Running Fox.

## CHAPTER IX

### AWAY ON THE SEARCH

WHEN the six scouts who were going to search for Spotted Deer assembled at the lodge of Sky Dog they found the old Medicine Man seated beside a small fire. He was tossing handfuls of dried sweet grass upon the embers, and droning a medicine song. For some moments he took no notice of the little company of warriors who stood at the entrance to the lodge, waiting for an invitation to enter. At last he looked up and saw them.

"Come in," he said, curtly. "Sit down here in front of me. No, no, do not come so close. Move back. There, that is good."

When they had obeyed his instructions he resumed the ceremony which they had interrupted. They watched with solemn interest while he continued to toss sweet grass upon the fire and chant the medicine song.

Getanittowit, here is sweet smoke for you.  
I am making it to please you.

Getanittowit, I hope you will feel good about it.  
Great Getanittowit, I hope you will help me.

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*Away on the Search*

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In a few moments Sky Dog rose and took the sacred medicine pipe from a tripod of poles at the rear of the lodge. He unwrapped it with great care and brought it to the fire. He filled the bowl with the inner bark of the red willow and lighted it with an ember. He puffed smoke toward the sky, the abode of Great Getanitutowit; toward the earth, the abode of the mysterious Underneath People; toward the north, the east, the south and the west, the abodes of the Wind Makers. Then he puffed smoke over the six scouts. Then for many moments he sat with his eyes closed.

The scouts were much impressed. They believed that Sky Dog was counseling with the mysterious Medicine Beings. They watched him with superstitious fascination, fearing to speak or even move lest they might break the spell and incur the displeasure of Sky Dog and the powerful Medicine People.

Running Fox, however, was impatient. He realized that each moment was precious, and he was eager to be away on the trail of the Mohawks. His great fear was that they might reach their village before he could overtake them. He knew only too well the fate that awaited Spotted Deer in the Mohawk camp. He was greatly relieved when Sky Dog finally opened his eyes and spoke.

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## *Spotted Deer*

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"My brothers, I will help you," he said. "I have talked with the mysterious Medicine People. It is good. I believe you will find Spotted Deer. I have asked the Medicine People to make you strong against the Mohawks."

He rose and went to the back of the lodge. In a few moments he returned with a buckskin thong to which was tied a small charm or token. He fastened it about the neck of Running Fox.

"Running Fox, I am giving this to you because you are the leader," he said. "It is the claw of the mysterious Medicine Beaver. It will make you brave. It will keep you strong. It will make you safe against your enemies. Now, my friends, you must go. When you have gone I will do some other things to help you. I believe you will do what you are setting out to do. I have spoken."

"Sky Dog, we have seen you talking with the mysterious Medicine People," Running Fox told him. "You have asked them to help us. It is good. It makes us feel strong. You have fastened this Medicine Thing around my neck. You say it will help me. I will keep it. Now we are going to find our brother Spotted Deer."

They immediately left the lodge. As they appeared in the village they were surrounded by a great company of friends who were eager to

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## *Away on the Search*

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warn and advise. Running Fox refused to loiter.

"My friends, we cannot stop here to talk," he told them. "If the Mohawks have carried off Spotted Deer we must travel fast to come up with them. There is little time. We must go."

A few moments later they left the village and went to the river. Then Running Fox explained his plans.

"My brothers, you heard the words of Black Panther," he said. "Perhaps there are many Mohawks hiding in the woods. We must be cautious. It would be foolish to take canoes. The Mohawks would surely see us. We must travel on foot. There is only one way to do this thing. Some of us must travel along the other side of the river. Some of us must go along this side. Then perhaps we will find some signs of Spotted Deer."

"It is good," agreed Yellow Wolf.

"I will ask Painted Hawk, and Turning Eagle and Crooked Foot to go across the river," said Running Fox. "I will ask Yellow Wolf and Dancing Owl to stay on this side with me. Now, my friends, you must listen sharp to what I am about to tell you. In the day we will talk to each other with the call of Woakus, the fox. When it grows dark we will use the voice of Gokhos, the owl. If you make one call we will know where

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## *Spotted Deer*

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you are. If you make three calls we will know you have found signs of Spotted Deer. If you make the call end in the middle we will know you are in danger. If you hear us make those calls you will know about it. Come, we will go."

"Who will take us across the river?" inquired Painted Hawk.

A number of volunteers offered to paddle the scouts across the water. When they were half-way across the river, Running Fox and his companions disappeared into the woods.

"We must travel fast," said Running Fox.

It was a notable company. Dancing Owl and Turning Eagle were young warriors about the age of Running Fox. Both were noted for their courage and ability. Dancing Owl had killed a number of Mohawks and had been captured by the Shawnees. Turning Eagle was a famous scout. Yellow Wolf and Painted Hawk and Crooked Foot were seasoned veterans of the war trail. Each was the hero of many thrilling exploits. Running Fox had great confidence in the warriors whom he had chosen to accompany him. He believed that once on the trail of Spotted Deer, they would follow it into the Mohawk camp if it became necessary.

Running Fox led the way along a familiar trail that followed the river toward the north. His anxiety for his friend made him impatient,

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*Away on the Search*

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and he traveled at an exhausting pace. Dancing Owl and Yellow Wolf kept close behind him. At midday they found themselves a considerable distance from the Delaware village. Then they became more cautious.

"Now we must watch sharp," said Running Fox.

Aware that at any moment they might encounter a Mohawk war party, they kept their eyes and ears alert to discover the slightest hint of danger. Their caution seemed useless, for they saw nothing to arouse their suspicions.

"Those Mohawks must have gone up the river," declared Dancing Owl.

Running Fox remained silent. He found little comfort in the words of Dancing Owl. His mind was filled with gloomy premonitions concerning Spotted Deer. For the moment the fate of his friend was all that interested him. If the Mohawks had withdrawn from the Delaware hunting grounds he feared that they had taken Spotted Deer with them. Running Fox grew weak at the thought. It roused him to still greater efforts, and he almost ran along the trail in his eagerness to overtake his foes.

At dark the Delawares stopped to rest. Then Running Fox attempted to locate his tribesmen on the other side of the river. Approaching close to the water, he gave the cry of Gokhos,

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## *Spotted Deer*

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the owl. They listened anxiously as it echoed through the woods. Many moments passed. There was no response.

"Our brothers are far behind," said Running Fox.

The thought disturbed him. He had planned to continue traveling through the night in the hope of gaining upon the Mohawks. Still he disliked to go ahead without hearing from the scouts on the other side of the river. He waited impatiently. Then he repeated the signal. Again it failed to bring an answer. Running Fox grew uneasy.

"It is mysterious," he told Yellow Wolf. "I do not know what to make of it. Perhaps something bad has happened to our friends. Perhaps the Mohawks were hiding over there."

"No, I do not believe anything has happened to our brothers," Yellow Wolf told him. "We came here very fast. We followed a trail. Our friends could not come so fast. It is hard going on the other side of the river. They fell behind. I believe they will come."

"Well, Yellow Wolf, I see that what you say may be true," said Running Fox.

Then for some moments he remained silent. His mind was filled with disturbing possibilities. He found it difficult to come to a decision. He realized that each moment of delay lessened his

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*Away on the Search*

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chance of overtaking the Mohawks. Still he wished to know what had happened to his friends. It seemed foolish to go ahead until he heard from them. It was possible that they might have encountered the Mohawks, or found Spotted Deer or some signs of him. Running Fox finally determined to wait.

The three scouts had barely seated themselves at the edge of the woods when they heard the call of Gokhos a short distance farther down the river. Their spirits rose at the sound, for they realized that their friends were safe.

"Our brothers have come," said Dancing Owl.

"It is good," Running Fox replied, with much relief.

A moment afterward he replied to the signal. There was no answer. He had not expected any. Having located him he knew that his tribesmen would continue along the river in silence. Too many signals might arouse the suspicions of any foes who might be loitering in the vicinity.

"Come, my brothers, we will go ahead," said Running Fox. "When our friends come they will make the signal. When they do not hear anything they will know that we have gone. Then they will go ahead. We will keep going until we get to the place where the big fires

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## *Spotted Deer*

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were. Then we will stop and rest. When it gets light we will look around."

Running Fox again led the way at a break-neck pace. The trail led through a dense black forest of towering pines and hemlocks, and the Delawares were unable to see a bow-length before them. In spite of the darkness, however, they had little difficulty in keeping the trail. They followed its narrow winding course with the speed and certainty of Timmeau, the wolf. Day was close at hand when they finally approached the spot where Dancing Owl had discovered the Mohawks.

"We are coming to the place where I saw those fires," he said.

"Now you must go ahead," Running Fox told him.

Dancing Owl took the lead. They realized that they might be blundering into a trap, and they were as alert and cautious as Woakus, the fox. Mauwallauwin, the great Hunting Moon, shed his light upon the river, and they kept a sharp watch for canoes. It was not long before Dancing Owl stopped and pointed toward the water.

"See, there is the place where I saw the fire," he said.

They stood at the edge of the woods and looked upon a wide, open stretch of beach that

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*Away on the Search*

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intervened between the water and the forest. The place which Dancing Owl had indicated was several arrow-flights farther along the river. He was eager to approach it, but Running Fox counseled caution.

"Wait," he said. "Perhaps there is some one there. We will watch and listen."

"Your words are good," declared Yellow Wolf.

They waited some time, and then as they discovered nothing to arouse their fears they moved noiselessly toward the place where the fire had burned. They had gone less than a bow-shot, however, when Dancing Owl suddenly collided with a great black form that rose from the trail. There was an angry snarl, and two fierce eyes blazed from the darkness.

"Machque!" cried Dancing Owl, as he sprang back and shot his arrow.

A savage roar sounded through the night as the bear charged upon the astounded Delawares. It struck down Dancing Owl and then rushed at Running Fox. He shot his arrow and dodged nimbly around a tree. The next instant the enraged bear confronted Yellow Wolf. He, too, drove his arrow into it, and sprang from its path. Then it crashed away into the darkness. For some moments they heard it flounder-

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## *Spotted Deer*

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ing noisily through the undergrowth, and then the sounds ceased.

"Hi, Machque is mad," laughed Running Fox, as he came from behind the tree.

"I thought he was a Mohawk," said Dancing Owl.

"Did he tear you?" Yellow Wolf asked, anxiously.

"No," replied Dancing Owl. "He tried to strike me but I jumped away. Then he bumped into me and I fell down."

"Well, we all shot arrows into him," said Yellow Wolf. "I believe he went over there and fell down dead."

"Come, we will go over there and find out about it," Dancing Owl proposed, impulsively.

"No, no, that would be foolish," Running Fox told him. "Machque is sly. Perhaps he has gone away. Perhaps he is waiting to fool us. It is black under those big trees. We cannot see him. Perhaps he would kill us. I am not afraid but we have set out to find Spotted Deer. If we let Machque tear us we cannot help our brother. It will soon be light. Then we will find Machque."

"Yes, Running Fox, I see that it is the best thing to do," agreed Dancing Owl.

"We must watch sharp. Perhaps Machque will come back," said Yellow Wolf.

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*Away on the Search*

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"Yes, we will keep quiet and watch," Running Fox told him.

They seated themselves at the edge of the timber to wait for daylight. Dancing Owl was almost exhausted. Having traveled at top speed to reach the Delaware camp with news of the Mohawks, the return journey had been a severe test of his courage and endurance. He lay upon the ground and immediately fell into a heavy slumber. His comrades remained awake to watch.

## CHAPTER X

### THE ABANDONED CANOE

AT dawn Running Fox and his companions made their way to the edge of the timber and looked anxiously along the river. A short bow-shot away they saw the charred logs and ashes from the fire. Then they looked across the water and saw the remnants from the other fire. For the moment, however, the Delawares took little interest. Their first thought was to look for the Mohawks. They watched some time, but saw nothing to indicate that their foes had loitered in the vicinity. Still, Running Fox determined to take every precaution.

"I believe the Mohawks have gone away," he said, finally. "But we must not feel too sure about it. Perhaps they are hiding in the woods. Dancing Owl, you must keep watching. Come, Yellow Wolf, we will look for Machque. I believe he is close by. If we find him we will get back our arrows."

"It is good," said Yellow Wolf.

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## *The Abandoned Canoe*

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They left Dancing Owl concealed at the edge of the forest, and went to search for the bear. The trail was plain and easy to follow and red splashes on the leaves gave evidence that Machque had been badly wounded. They had little doubt that he was already dead. Still they resolved to take no chances, for they knew that if Machque was alive he might prove to be a dangerous foe. They advanced with great caution, watching closely for a sight of the bear. Then, within an arrow-flight, the trail suddenly came to an end at a great tangle of brush and fallen timber.

"Look sharp," Running Fox cautioned.  
"Machque is in there."

They stopped and peered anxiously into the cover. It was dense and as twilight still lingered beneath the heavy stand of evergreens they were unable to discover the bear. Several times they thought they saw it, but they were deceived by stumps and shadows. They listened a long time, but heard nothing to give them a clew.

"If Machque is in there, he must be dead," Yellow Wolf said, at last.

"Perhaps he crawled through that place and went out on the other side," Running Fox told him. "We will circle around and find out about it."

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## *Spotted Deer*

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"It is the best thing to do," said Yellow Wolf.

They separated and began to move cautiously around the tangle. They had taken only a few strides when they heard low, ominous growls coming from beneath a confused mass of roots and brush. They stopped and prepared to fight.

"Look sharp, Machque is coming out!" Running Fox cried, warningly.

A moment afterward there was a sharp crackling of sticks and the wounded bear forced its way through the tangle. It emerged within a bow-length of Yellow Wolf. At sight of him it reared unsteadily upon its hind legs, and Yellow Wolf drove his arrow into its chest. Roaring furiously, the bear dropped to its feet and turned to enter the cover. Yellow Wolf ran close up to it and drove another arrow behind its shoulder. Machque flashed about with the agility of a lynx and rushed wildly upon his foe. Yellow Wolf turned to run but tripped over a log and plunged headlong into the brush. At that moment Running Fox rushed recklessly upon the bear and struck it with his tomahawk. Machque wheeled to attack him, and then Yellow Wolf jumped to his feet and shot an arrow. The bear collapsed. For some moments it continued to struggle, and then it lay still. The Delawares looked at each other and smiled.

"Machque is dead," said Yellow Wolf. "He

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## *The Abandoned Canoe*

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was very strong and very fierce. Running Fox, you were brave. You kept Machque from tearing me. I will tell our people about it."

Having killed the bear, they had little inclination to loiter. They left Machque where he had fallen and turned toward the river. They found Dancing Owl staring anxiously across the water. He heard them approaching and motioned for them to be cautious. Then he pointed mysteriously across the river. Running Fox and Yellow Wolf feared to move. For some moments they stood motionless, searching the opposite shore. Then Dancing Owl signaled for them to advance. They sank to their hands and knees and crawled carefully through the undergrowth.

"What do you see?" Running Fox inquired in a cautious whisper.

"I saw something moving through the bushes," Dancing Owl told him. "I do not know what it is."

"Where was it?" asked Yellow Wolf.

"Over there near that white tree," said Dancing Owl.

They fixed their eyes on a large white birch at the edge of the woods. It was close by the place where the fire had been. They wondered if crafty Mohawk scouts were lingering in the vicinity. They watched anxiously, but the mysterious object failed to appear.

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## *Spotted Deer*

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"Did it look like a warrior?" inquired Running Fox.

"I do not know," replied Dancing Owl. "I saw some bushes move. Then something passed. It went fast. It was behind the bushes. I could not see what it was."

"Perhaps our brothers are over there," suggested Yellow Wolf.

Running Fox remained silent. A still more interesting possibility had entered his mind.

"Perhaps it was Spotted Deer," he said.

"Yes, yes, perhaps it was Spotted Deer," Dancing Owl said, eagerly. "Come, give the signal and we will see what comes of it."

"That would be bad," Running Fox warned him. "If the Mohawks are over there we must keep quiet and watch. If it is Spotted Deer our brothers will meet him. Then they will call us."

A moment later they heard the call of Woakus, the fox, a short distance farther down the river. They listened in breathless suspense. Two stirring possibilities instantly flashed across their minds. Had their friends met Spotted Deer? Were they about to call them? The signal, however, was not repeated. They turned to one another in alarm. Aware that their tribesmen were advancing along the oppo-

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## *The Abandoned Canoe*

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site side of the river, they feared that they might be blundering into an ambush.

"It is bad," Yellow Wolf whispered, uneasily. "We do not know who is over there. If the Mohawks are hiding in that place they will catch our brothers. We must warn them."

"Yes, yes, make the signal," Dancing Owl said, anxiously.

"Wait," cautioned Running Fox. "I have found out who is over there. Look sharp near that crooked tree. See, there is Achtu, the deer."

A moment afterward they saw the buck standing at the edge of the timber. It had raised its head and was looking down the river. They believed it had caught the danger scent. An instant later it vanished into the shadows.

"Achtu has run away," said Running Fox. "Our brothers must be close."

Then he replied to the signal. In a few moments an answer came from across the river. Painted Hawk and his companions were almost at the place where the fire had been lighted.

"Our friends have come up with us—it is good," said Running Fox. "They will keep watching over there. Now we will go and look around that place where the fire was."

They spent some time scouting about in the vicinity of the spot where the fire had been.

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## *Spotted Deer*

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They found several tracks near the ashes from the fire, and the mark of a canoe at the edge of the water. As the clews were of little importance Running Fox was eager to hurry away on the trail of the Mohawks.

"See, our friends are over there," Yellow Wolf said, suddenly.

They saw two of their comrades searching along the opposite shore. Running Fox quickly identified them as Painted Hawk and Crooked Foot. He had little doubt that Turning Eagle was on guard at the edge of the woods. Running Fox stood at the edge of the water and waved his arms. When he had attracted the attention of his tribesmen, he pointed toward the north and made it plain that he was about to continue along the river. Then Painted Hawk pointed to the woods behind him and swept his arm in a short circle.

"Our brothers are going to move around over there to look for something," Running Fox told his companions. "Perhaps they have found a sign."

"See, they are telling us to wait here," Dancing Owl cried, excitedly.

Painted Hawk had pointed across the water and then seated himself. In a few moments he rose and again swept his arm toward the woods.

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## *The Abandoned Canoe*

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Then he appeared to be waiting for a signal from his friends.

"I am going ahead," said Running Fox. "Yellow Wolf, I will ask you to go with me. Dancing Owl, you must stay here and wait for a signal from Painted Hawk."

Dancing Owl walked from the timber and seated himself near the water. Running Fox pointed toward him. Then he pointed toward Yellow Wolf and himself and then up the river. Painted Hawk seemed to understand. A moment afterward he and Crooked Foot disappeared into the timber.

"Dancing Owl, you must hide in the woods and wait," said Running Fox. "Come, Yellow Wolf, we will go."

At that instant Dancing Owl was looking sharply along the shore. Then he pointed excitedly toward a boulder that rose above the water, a short distance away.

"I saw something go behind that rock," he said.

Running Fox and Yellow Wolf turned in alarm. The next moment they saw something drifting slowly past the boulder. The three Delawares stared at it in amazement. They had suddenly recognized it as a paddle. The discovery roused their suspicions. They feared that a canoe was somewhere near.

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## *Spotted Deer*

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"Come, jump into the bushes!" cried Running Fox.

They hid themselves and looked anxiously up the river. The paddle was near the shore and appeared to be drifting still nearer. They watched it in trying suspense. They longed to secure it, but still they feared to make the attempt.

"Perhaps the Mohawks saw us," said Yellow Wolf. "Perhaps they threw that paddle into the water to fool us. If we try to get it we may be killed."

"Yes, I believe it is a trick," Dancing Owl said, suspiciously.

Running Fox kept silent. He was staring at the paddle with eager, fascinated eyes. He had suddenly resolved to secure it.

"Keep watching," he cried, as he ran toward the river.

He waded into the water and when it rose to his waist, he reached out and drew the paddle toward him with his bow. As he lifted the paddle from the water he cried out in astonishment. Then he hurried to the shore and ran to his companions.

"See, see, this paddle belongs to Spotted Deer!" he told them, excitedly. "Here is his mark."

They instantly recognized the design which

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## *The Abandoned Canoe*

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had been cut into the blade. For some time they stared at it in silence. They were trying to guess how the paddle had chanced to drift into their hands.

"It is bad," Running Fox said, finally.

His companions kept silent. They had little doubt that ill fortune of some sort had befallen Spotted Deer, and their minds were filled with gloomy premonitions. The finding of the paddle made them almost certain that Spotted Deer had been either captured or killed by the Mohawks. Running Fox was crushed by the possibility. For some moments he appeared unable to rouse himself. Then he suddenly turned toward the river and imitated the cry of Woakus, the fox. Three times he sent the call across the water to tell his friends that he had found signs of Spotted Deer.

"Come, Yellow Wolf, we will go ahead and try to find out about this thing," he said.  
"Dancing Owl, you must stay here."

"I will wait," Dancing Owl told him.

Suspicious and fearful of running into a trap, the two Delawares moved along the river with great caution. They kept close to the water, hoping to find further clews to the fate of Spotted Deer. They had gone a considerable distance when they finally discovered something which caused them to stop and exclaim in alarm.

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## *Spotted Deer*

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An overturned canoe had lodged in a mass of driftwood a short distance from the shore. The canoe was of Delaware design, and they knew at once that it belonged to their missing tribesman. They gazed upon it in silent dismay. Each was unwilling to express the fear which had entered his mind. Running Fox again gave the signal which told his friends that he had found further signs of Spotted Deer. Soon afterward Dancing Owl came to join them.

"My brothers, something bad has happened to Spotted Deer," he said, solemnly, as he saw the canoe.

Running Fox stared wildly into his face. His misery showed in his eyes, and his companions looked upon him with pity. Two alarming possibilities confronted them. They believed that Spotted Deer had either been overtaken and killed by the Mohawks or had overturned his canoe and perished in the river in a desperate effort to escape.

"I am going out to get that canoe," Running Fox said, suddenly.

He again waded into the river and made his way to the overturned canoe. There was a long, jagged rent in the bow. The discovery increased his fears for Spotted Deer. He dragged the canoe to the shore and watched in gloomy

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## *The Abandoned Canoe*

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silence while Yellow Wolf and Dancing Owl made a careful examination.

"Well, my friends, what do you make of it?" Running Fox asked them.

"It is bad," declared Yellow Wolf. "I believe that hole was made by a rock. Perhaps Spotted Deer was going fast to get away from the Mohawks. Perhaps it was dark. He could not see far ahead. Then he bumped into that rock and fell into the river. Perhaps the Water Monsters pulled him down. Perhaps he got to land. I cannot tell you about it. It looks bad."

"Yes, it looks bad," agreed Running Fox. "Dancing Owl, tell us how you feel about it."

"It looks bad," said Dancing Owl. "We found that paddle. That was bad. A warrior does not throw away his paddle. Now we have found this canoe. It was turned over. There is a hole in it. I believe something bad has happened to Spotted Deer."

"Listen," cautioned Running Fox.

At that moment they heard the call of Woakus, the fox, somewhere in the vicinity of the spot where they had left Painted Hawk and his companions. In a few moments the signal was repeated. Then it sounded the third time. The Delawares looked at one another in surprise. Had their friends found signs of Spotted Deer on the other side of the river? It seemed

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## *Spotted Deer*

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impossible. Still there was no reason to doubt the signal.

"It is mysterious," declared Yellow Wolf.

Running Fox repeated the call. Then they listened in grave suspense. It was not long before the answer came. Again the signal sounded three times. There was no chance for uncertainty. It was plain that Painted Hawk and his companions had discovered a clew. The thought filled Running Fox with hope. Then he began to wonder if his tribesmen had been deceived. Having found the paddle and canoe of Spotted Deer, it was difficult to understand how the latter had been located on the other side of the river. Still Running Fox had full confidence in the judgment and skill of Painted Hawk and his companions. All were experienced warriors and scouts, and he knew that they would be unlikely to send a false signal.

"I do not know what to make of this thing, but I believe our brothers have found something," he said, finally. "If Spotted Deer was over there, perhaps he is alive."

"Perhaps Spotted Deer is with our brothers," Dancing Owl suggested, hopefully.

Running Fox and Yellow Wolf remained silent. They were doubtful. Running Fox felt quite certain that if Spotted Deer had met his tribesmen, he would have sent a signal across

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## *The Abandoned Canoe*

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the water to relieve the anxiety of his friends.

"Well, my brothers, we must try to find out about this thing," declared Running Fox. "It would be foolish to go ahead until we know about it. I am the leader. I will tell you what I propose to do. We must cross the water and talk with our friends. There is only one way to get over there. We must use this canoe. We cannot do that until we close that hole. Come, we will pull the canoe into the woods and fix it. Then we will wait until it gets dark. Then we will go to meet our friends."

They carried the canoe some distance into the woods. Then, while Dancing Owl watched the river, Running Fox and Yellow Wolf scouted through the woods searching for pitch. They found it in hard nodules on the trunks of many of the pines and spruces, and they soon gathered a sufficient quantity. Then they returned to Dancing Owl who said that he had seen nothing to cause alarm.

"It is good," said Running Fox. "Pretty soon we will be ready to go across the water."

They made a small fire between two logs and placed a large flat stone across them. When it became heated they placed the pitch upon it. It took a long time for the pitch to soften. When it finally began to melt they daubed it upon the ends of flattened sticks and hurried to the ca-

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*Spotted Deer*

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noe. Then as Dancing Owl and Yellow Wolf held the jagged edges of the bark in place, Running Fox applied a thick coating of hot pitch over the tear. It was necessary to make many applications both on the inside and outside of the canoe to render it water-tight. When the task finally was completed the day was well advanced.

"Now we will cross the water and meet our friends," proposed Dancing Owl.

"No, my brother," Running Fox cautioned him. "We must wait. We made a fire. Perhaps the Mohawks saw the smoke. Perhaps they are watching the water. We will wait until it gets dark."

"Yes, we must wait," agreed Yellow Wolf.

## CHAPTER XI

### A COUNCIL OF WAR

WHEN twilight finally fell, Running Fox and his companions carried the canoe to the river. They launched it and found it water-tight. Then Running Fox paddled slowly along the edge of the shore. They were watchful and alert for danger, but the river appeared free of foes. It was almost dark when they came opposite the spot where they expected to find their friends. Running Fox ceased paddling and imitated the cry of Gokhos, the owl. It was answered from the other side of the river.

"Our friends are waiting," said Yellow Wolf.

Running Fox turned the canoe toward the center of the river. Once beyond the shadows near the shore, they realized that they were in plain sight of any foes who might be lurking in the forest. They kept a sharp watch for the sudden appearance of canoes. When they came within bow-shot of the place where the fire had been, Running Fox again ceased paddling and

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## *Spotted Deer*

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waited for a signal. He felt quite sure that they had been seen by their friends. In a few moments they heard the call of Gokhos directly ahead of them. Running Fox paddled cautiously toward the shore. Then they recognized the voice of Painted Hawk.

"My brothers, the way is clear," he said.

As they stepped ashore their friends hurried forward to inquire about the canoe. When they learned that it belonged to Spotted Deer they were dumb with amazement.

"It is mysterious," Painted Hawk declared, at last. "I believe Spotted Deer was in this place. How did his canoe get across the water?"

"Have you found signs of Spotted Deer?" Running Fox inquired, quickly.

"We found signs that told us a prisoner was here," said Painted Hawk. "I believe it was Spotted Deer. That is why I called you. When it grows light I will show you those signs. Perhaps you can tell us about it."

"If Spotted Deer is a prisoner it would be foolish to wait," Running Fox declared, impatiently.

"We found many tracks," explained Painted Hawk. "We cannot follow them until it gets light."

"Well, tell us about it," said Yellow Wolf.

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## *A Council of War*

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"Wait," cautioned Running Fox. "First we must pull this canoe into the bushes. Then we will go and sit down in the woods. See, Mauwallauwin is peeping over the trees. Pretty soon the river will be light. If we stay here in the open, perhaps our enemies will see us."

The others quickly saw the wisdom of his words. The moon was rising above the eastern ridges and they knew that they would soon become conspicuous on the open shore of the river. They dragged the canoe from the water and carried it into the bushes. Then they withdrew into the shelter of the forest. Fearful of making a fire, they seated themselves in a little circle and began to talk.

"My brothers, I will tell you about this thing," said Painted Hawk. "When we came to this place we began to look around for our enemies. We did not find them. Then we came down here near the water and began to look for signs. We saw some tracks around the place where the fire was. We saw the marks of canoes near the water. Then we began to look around. Pretty soon we found some tracks in the woods. Then we found some ashes and black wood behind a rock. We saw where some people had been lying down. Then Turning Eagle found something big. His eyes are sharp. He was looking at a place where some one had

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## *Spotted Deer*

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been lying down. Then he saw something to tell about. Come, Turning Eagle, tell our brothers about it."

"I will tell you about it," said Turning Eagle. "I was looking around that place where those people had been lying down. I was looking sharp. Then I saw something strange. It looked like it looks when our brother Wisawanik, the squirrel, pulls away the leaves. I looked close at that place. Then I saw some more marks on the ground. They were made by fingers. Then I thought about it. I said, 'Some one was lying down with his hands behind him.' They were in the middle of his back. They were crossed. Then I said, 'That person was a prisoner.' Then I called Painted Hawk and Crooked Foot to look at those marks. They felt good about it. That is all I have to say about it."

"Are you sure about this thing?" Running Fox inquired, eagerly.

"Yes," declared Turning Eagle. "I looked sharp. What I have told you is true."

"Come, we will go to this place," proposed Dancing Owl.

"No, we must not do that," Running Fox told him. "If we go to that place in the dark we cannot see anything. Perhaps we will wipe away many tracks. We must wait until the light

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## *A Council of War*

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comes. Then we will go and find out about it."

"This thing is mysterious," declared Yellow Wolf. "If the Mohawks caught Spotted Deer over here, how did we come to find his canoe on the other side of the water?"

For some moments the Delawares remained silent. They seemed unable to answer the question. The circumstances were confusing. At last, however, Dancing Owl spoke.

"My brothers, I saw those big fires near the water," he told them. "I went up close. Then I saw the Mohawks. I saw them go up the river. I did not see anything of Spotted Deer."

"Turning Eagle, did those people who were here go back to the river?" Running Fox asked, anxiously.

"I cannot tell you that," said Turning Eagle. "We found many tracks. Some were going toward the woods. Some were going toward the river. They were all mixed together. But I will tell you that some tracks went away into the woods. Yes, I believe those people went away toward the-place-where-the-sun-sleeps. We tried to follow those tracks. Then it got dark and we could not see them."

Running Fox was greatly impressed by the announcement. His mind was filled with interesting possibilities. He began to doubt that the Mohawks had carried Spotted Deer up the river.

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## *Spotted Deer*

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The uncertainty gave him hope. Still he was unable to guess what had become of his friend. Having found his abandoned canoe it was evident that misfortune of some sort had overtaken him. For the moment Running Fox felt helpless to solve the mystery of Spotted Deer's strange disappearance. His one hope was that Spotted Deer was still alive.

"My friends, I will tell you how I feel about this thing," said Yellow Wolf. "Spotted Deer has disappeared. We have found his canoe. Something bad must have happened to him. Dancing Owl saw the Mohawks in this place. He did not see Spotted Deer in their canoes. Painted Hawk and Crooked Foot and Turning Eagle are good scouts. They have found many tracks over here. Turning Eagle says there was a prisoner here. I believe his words. Now, my friends, we cannot tell who left those tracks. I believe they were Mohawks. We cannot tell about that prisoner. Perhaps it was Spotted Deer. Perhaps it was some one different. We cannot tell about those big fires. Now you see if we cannot tell about these things it will be hard to know what to do. Come, Running Fox, you are the leader, tell us about it."

"Yellow Wolf, what you say is true," replied Running Fox. "It is hard to know about this thing. I will tell you how I feel about it. I do

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## *A Council of War*

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not believe the Mohawks took Spotted Deer up the river. Dancing Owl was watching. He did not see him. Turning Eagle has sharp eyes. I believe what he tells us is true. I believe that prisoner was Spotted Deer. If he was with the people who slept at this place, then they must have taken him away. Turning Eagle says they went away toward the-place-where-the-sun-sleeps. My friends, perhaps those people were not Mohawks. The Shawnees live over there beyond the hills. Perhaps those people were Shawnees. Perhaps they came over here to hunt. Perhaps they caught Spotted Deer. Perhaps they are going to the Shawnee village. When it gets light we will try to find out about it. Now I cannot tell you any more."

"Running Fox, your words are good," said Painted Hawk. "I believe those people who went away on foot were Shawnees. I cannot tell about Spotted Deer. You found his canoe on the other side of the water. I believe he was over there. Perhaps the Mohawks caught him over there. Perhaps they did not come down where Dancing Owl was watching. Dancing Owl says he heard the call of Gokhos. It was up the river. Perhaps the people who caught Spotted Deer were calling the warriors at the fires. Perhaps the Mohawks followed Spotted Deer down the river. Perhaps they made those

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## *Spotted Deer*

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fires so that he could not pass. I do not know about this thing. This is how I feel about it."

"My brothers, I have listened to the words of Yellow Wolf, and Running Fox and Painted Hawk," said Crooked Foot. "Now I will give you some words. We must try to find out the best thing to do. I will tell you how I feel about it. I believe the Mohawks were here and I believe the Shawnees were here. I believe the Mohawks went away in canoes. I believe the Shawnees walked away. I saw those marks on the ground. I believe there was a prisoner lying in that place. If it was Spotted Deer, then I believe he went away with the Shawnees. That is all I have to say about it."

Then the Delawares became silent. Having failed to come to a definite conclusion regarding the disappearance of their tribesman, each of them was meditating upon the possibilities suggested by his friends. They realized that only daylight could give them a clew to the mystery.

"Well, I see that we feel different about this thing," Running Fox told them. "There is no use of talking any more. We must wait until the light comes. Then we will go and look sharp at those tracks. If they tell us that Spotted Deer was taken away by the Shawnees, we will know what to do. If we cannot tell about it then

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## *A Council of War*

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we must separate. Some of us must go to the Mohawk village. Some of us must try to follow the people who walked away. My friends, that is all I can tell you about it."

"We will wait until it gets light," agreed his friends.

A moment afterward Running Fox rose and walked away. His heart was heavy with grief and he wished to be alone. He made his way to the edge of the timber and seated himself at the base of a giant pine. The great, black forest was hushed in slumber. The night was glorious. The air was sharp and still. The heavens were sprinkled with stars. The river sparkled in the moonlight. Running Fox was unimpressed. His mind was filled with thoughts of Spotted Deer.

"It is bad," he kept telling himself.

Convinced that Spotted Deer had been captured by either the Mohawks or the Shawnees, Running Fox realized that each moment of delay lessened the chance of saving him. The thought that Spotted Deer might be depending upon him drove him into a frenzy of despair. He saw little chance of overtaking his foes before they reached their village, and then he feared he might be too late to help his friend. His courage weakened at the thought. Spotted Deer had been his loyal friend and companion

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## *Spotted Deer*

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since early boyhood, and a strong affection existed between them. They had shared many perilous adventures and each had risked his life to save the other. Now, when he believed Spotted Deer was in urgent need of assistance, Running Fox felt powerless to help him. The thought overwhelmed him with grief. Rising to his feet, he spread his arms toward the sky and offered an earnest, impassioned appeal to Getanittowit, the Great One.

Great Getanittowit, listen to my words.  
Getanittowit, something bad has happened.  
Getanittowit, tell me about it.  
Great Getanittowit, my heart is black.  
Getanittowit, take pity on me.  
Getanittowit, make me brave and strong.  
Getanittowit, give me power to find Spotted Deer.

After he had finished his appeal, Running Fox stood for a long time staring anxiously into the heavens. Then a star swept across the sky and dropped into the west. The superstitious young warrior accepted it as a good omen. He believed that his prayer had been answered.

“Getanittowit has sent me a sign,” he said.  
“Now I will find Spotted Deer.”

## CHAPTER XII

### ON THE TRAIL

IT was barely light when the anxious Delaware scouts hastened to the river to study the tracks at the spot where the fire had been. Running Fox spent only a few moments at that place. Then he moved along at the edge of the water. He soon found the marks of several canoes, and stopped to examine them. There were many tracks on the shore. It was evident that the skillful young scout had found a clew. He crouched low to the ground and studied the footprints with great care. His companions watched hopefully. Then he suddenly left them, and went farther along the river. He coursed to and fro between the woods and the water like an eager wolf on the trail of game. At last he disappeared into the forest. His friends waited patiently. They believed he was working out some clew which he had discovered at the spot where the canoes had been lifted from the water. It was a long time before he returned. Then they saw him approach-

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*Spotted Deer*

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ing slowly along the edge of the woods. He appeared to be following a trail. In a few moments he called his friends. As they joined him he crouched and pointed to several moccasin tracks which were scarcely discernible on an open patch of ground.

"My friends, I have found out about this thing," Running Fox said, as his eyes flashed excitedly. "Come, we will go back where those canoes were, and I will tell you about it."

When they arrived at that spot, Running Fox again stooped to examine the tracks. He seemed to be studying them even more carefully than before. Several times he measured them with his hands. Then he rose and smiled confidently at his friends.

"Yes, my brothers, I know about this thing," he said. "I will tell you about it. I believe Spotted Deer was brought here in one of those canoes. See, here are the tracks of some one who stepped out of one of those canoes. He stood here by himself. Those other tracks are all around him. I believe the warrior who stood alone was a prisoner. Those other people stood around to look at him. I believe that prisoner was Spotted Deer. I believe some one brought him across the water in a canoe. My brothers, I do not believe the Mohawks had anything to do with it."

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## *On the Trail*

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His friends exclaimed in surprise. If Spotted Deer had been brought there in a canoe, they believed it must have been the Mohawks who had brought him. It was some moments before they recovered from their astonishment. Then they began to question Running Fox.

"Who do you believe brought Spotted Deer here?" Painted Hawk asked him.

"The Shawnees," said Running Fox.

"Dancing Owl saw Mohawks in those canoes," Crooked Foot reminded him.

"Yes, I believe the words of Dancing Owl," declared Running Fox. "Now you must listen close. When I saw these tracks I knew there was a prisoner in one of those canoes. I believe it was Spotted Deer. Turning Eagle says some people took him away toward the-place-where-the-sun-sleeps. I believe it was the Shawnees. Then I said, 'The Shawnees must have come in those canoes. That prisoner got out of one of those canoes. Dancing Owl saw the Mohawks take the canoes away. How did it happen? I will try to find out about it.' Then I went along the river. I looked sharp. Pretty soon I found a track. Then I found another. Then I found some more. They were coming this way. They kept close to the woods. I saw where some one had been standing. Then I said, 'These people stopped here to watch some-

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## *Spotted Deer*

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thing. They were cautious. I believe they were scouts.' I followed up those tracks. I went fast. Pretty soon I came to a place where two canoes had been pushed into the bushes. Then I began to think about it. Now I will tell you what I found out.

"I believe the people who came here in those canoes were Shawnees. I believe the people who came here on foot were Mohawks. I believe the Shawnees took those canoes from the Mohawks. I believe the Shawnees saw Spotted Deer. I believe some were ahead of him and some were behind him. I believe the Shawnees who were ahead of Spotted Deer made those big fires to light the river. Then he could not pass. I believe the other Shawnees came up with him. I believe Spotted Deer tried to get away and bumped into a rock. Then they caught him and brought him to the big fire. Then they got afraid and stopped that fire. Then they went up into the woods where Turning Eagle found those signs.

"Then I believe the Mohawks came down here after those canoes. They saw the fires. They crept down through the woods. The Shawnees heard them and ran away. Then the Mohawks took away the canoes. My friends, I believe Spotted Deer is in the Shawnee camp. That is how I feel about it."

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*On the Trail*

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"Running Fox, I believe what you say is true," Painted Hawk said, excitedly. "You are as sharp as Woakus, the fox."

"Yes, yes, Running Fox has found out about it," declared the others.

"Well, my friends, there is no use talking about it," Running Fox told them. "We must try to do something. Turning Eagle, show me the place where those people were lying down."

They made their way into the woods and soon came upon the remains of the fire behind the rock. Running Fox examined the signs. He agreed with Turning Eagle that one of those who had slept there was a prisoner.

"It must have been Spotted Deer," declared Running Fox. "Now we must try to find him. Come, we will follow those people."

He led the way along the trail. For some distance it was plain and easy to follow, and Running Fox marveled at the carelessness of his foes. It appeared that the travelers had little fear of being pursued.

"The Shawnees are like foolish old women," said Yellow Wolf. "They leave many signs."

Toward the end of the day, however, the trail began to grow indistinct and difficult to follow. The woods were freer from undergrowth and the travelers seemed to have become more cautious. They had left few signs. The Delawares

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## *Spotted Deer*

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were compelled to travel more slowly. Running Fox grew impatient at the delay.

"It is bad," he said, irritably. "It will take us a long time to reach the Shawnee village. Perhaps it will be too late to help Spotted Deer."

"If Spotted Deer is with these people, perhaps he will leave a sign," suggested Turning Eagle.

"I am watching sharp," Running Fox told him.

Soon afterward they lost the trail on a barren, rocky hillside. There were neither tracks nor signs to guide them, and they halted in dismay. Then they separated and began to search. Some moved along the slope, others went along the summit of the ridge.

"Perhaps it is a trick," Crooked Foot said suspiciously. "Perhaps those people have turned off. Perhaps they are not Shawnees."

The possibility was disturbing. Running Fox, however, felt confident. He believed they would find the trail at the base of the ridge. His hopes were verified when Turning Eagle suddenly called:

"Here are tracks," he said.

They hurried down the hillside and found the trail continuing toward the west. They followed it until the end of the day when it led

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*On the Trail*

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them to a little stream that flowed from the north. Running Fox stopped and looked sharply at Dancing Owl. Dancing Owl nodded understandingly. It was a familiar spot.

"This is the place where Running Fox and Spotted Deer took me away from the Shawnees," he told his companions. "They were very brave. They fought back many Shawnees."

The year previous, Dancing Owl had been captured by the Shawnees, who were taking him to their village, when Running Fox and Spotted Deer discovered his plight. They followed swiftly on the trail and overtook their foes at the stream. Then the daring Delawares crossed the water below their enemies and concealed themselves in the bushes on the opposite side of the stream. As the Shawnees were crossing, the two young Delawares made a fierce attack from ambush and threw the Shawnees into such confusion that Dancing Owl was able to escape. Then the three Delawares sped safely away while the bewildered Shawnees were hiding in the woods in fear of an attack from a large war party of Delawares. Dancing Owl told the story to his friends with great delight.

"It was a great thing to do," laughed Yellow Wolf. "The Delawares are too sharp for the foolish Shawnees."

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## *Spotted Deer*

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"Yes, yes," agreed Dancing Owl. "If Spotted Deer is alive we will fool the Shawnees and carry him away."

"Well, if the Shawnees have killed Spotted Deer, I do not care what becomes of me," declared Running Fox. "I will go into the Shawnee camp and keep shooting my arrows at the Shawnees until they kill me."

As the day was almost at an end the Delawares decided to spend the night beside the stream. Aware that the Shawnees might send scouts back along the trail to make sure that they had not been followed, Running Fox determined to take precautions.

"My friends, it would be foolish to stay here," he said. "I see that those people stopped here. Perhaps some of them will come back and find us. We will go along the water until we feel safe."

"It is good," said Painted Hawk.

They moved a considerable distance down the stream until they came to a dense stand of spruces. The heavy forest offered a splendid hiding place, and they determined to remain there until daylight. The night passed without alarm, and at dawn they crossed the stream. Then they again set out along the trail.

"We must look sharp," cautioned Running Fox. "Perhaps scouts have stayed behind to

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*On the Trail*

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watch. If they see us they will run to their people. Then they will kill Spotted Deer."

They saw nothing to arouse their suspicions, and at sunset they stopped at a little spring in the bottom of a wooded ravine. They soon found signs which made it plain that their foes had spent the night at that place.

"These people did not make a fire," said Running Fox. "I believe they were afraid. Perhaps they thought some one was close behind them."

"Perhaps some of the Mohawks followed them," Crooked Foot told him.

"No," replied Running Fox. "Those Mohawks came to get their canoes. When they got them they went away. They were close to our village. They were afraid of our people."

"Yes, I saw them go away," said Dancing Owl.

They spent the night in the ravine, and at dawn they again set out on the trail. It was not long before they found signs which gave evidence that the Shawnees were advancing with less caution. The Delawares believed that they were approaching the Shawnee camp. The thought roused them to their peril. They realized that at any moment they might encounter a company of Shawnee scouts.

"We have come into the country of our ene-

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## *Spotted Deer*

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mies," Running Fox warned them. "We must watch out."

A moment later he stopped suddenly and picked something from the ground. He stared at it in amazement. Then his face lighted with joy. He began to laugh. He held a buckskin knife-sheath above his head.

"See!" he cried, "Spotted Deer has left a sign. This thing belongs to him."

His companions crowded eagerly about him. They passed the knife-sheath from one to the other. It was of Delaware workmanship and bore a design similar to the one which they had seen on the blade of the paddle. There was no doubt that it belonged to Spotted Deer. They felt sure that the crafty young warrior had purposely dropped it to guide them on the trail. The thought filled them with hope.

"It is good," said Running Fox. "Now we know that Spotted Deer is in the Shawnee camp."

Although he fully understood the peril to which Spotted Deer was exposed, Running Fox was greatly relieved to know that his friend had escaped falling into the hands of the Mohawks. Aware of the intense hatred which those fierce foes had for Spotted Deer and himself, he knew that they would have wasted little time before taking vengeance upon the unfortunate captive.

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## *On the Trail*

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He was somewhat more hopeful, however, of finding Spotted Deer alive in the Shawnee camp.

"Here are more signs," he told his friends.

They loitered for a moment to examine a freshly broken branch. It had been twisted toward the west. They knew, at once, that it was the work of Spotted Deer.

"The Shawnees have untied the hands of Spotted Deer," laughed Yellow Wolf. "See how he is using them."

They continued to find other clews. Bent twigs, broken branches and loosened stones appeared at frequent intervals. The trail, too, had become wide and plain. It was evident that Spotted Deer was using his feet as well as his hands to leave signals for his friends. His stratagem made it possible for them to hurry along with little uncertainty. Then they came to a spot where the undergrowth was broken and trampled. They stopped to examine it.

"Some one fell down at this place," Running Fox said, soberly.

He stooped and began to look closely at the broken bushes. Then he examined the ground. His companions believed that he was searching for evidence to prove that Spotted Deer had been injured. They, too, looked upon the spot with alarm. They feared that the Shawnees might have suddenly detected Spotted Deer in

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## *Spotted Deer*

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the act of leaving a clew, and struck him down in their anger.

"Perhaps the Shawnees have killed our brother," said Running Fox, as his eyes flashed threateningly. "Come, look through the bushes."

Alarmed by his words, the Delawares separated and circled carefully about the spot. They searched faithfully but found nothing to confirm their fears.

"It is good," said Running Fox. "We will go ahead."

New clews assured them that Spotted Deer had passed the spot in safety. Encouraged by the thought, they rushed along at a furious pace. Running Fox was determined to reach the Shawnee village at the earliest possible moment.

"We must go fast," he said. "Perhaps the Shawnees are about to kill Spotted Deer."

The possibility roused the Delawares to frantic efforts and they sped through the woods with no thought of fatigue. Shortly after midday they came upon the place where the Shawnees had spent the third night. They saw the ashes from a fire, and they believed that the nearness of the village had made the Shawnees bold.

"Come, we must go faster," cried Running Fox, as he hurried on.

Darkness had already fallen when they finally

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*On the Trail*

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stopped on the summit of a steep, wooded ridge. Then as they looked down into the valley on the other side, they suddenly discovered the fires in the Shawnee village. For some moments they looked in silence. They thought of Spotted Deer and their hearts filled with ominous doubts. Was he still alive?

"Well, my brothers, there is the camp of our enemies, the Shawnees," said Running Fox. "Pretty soon some of us will go down there and try to find Spotted Deer. If he is alive, we will take him away. If he is dead, I will rush into the camp and kill many Shawnees."

## CHAPTER XIII

### A STRANGE ALLY

THE Shawnee camp was brightly illuminated by the glow from the fires, and the Delawares saw many people passing about. The Shawnees appeared to be engaged in their ordinary tasks, and there was nothing to indicate that anything of importance was taking place. The Delawares noted that the village was located beside a river. They saw the light reflected on the water.

"I have seen that camp before," said Yellow Wolf. "It is close by a big river. It is a long ways from the edge of the woods. The ground around it is bare. There are many high logs stuck in the ground around the village. It will be hard to get into it."

Running Fox listened in silence. He suddenly realized the difficulty of his task. If the camp was surrounded by a log stockade, he knew it would be impossible to see anything of Spotted Deer without entering the village. He had little hope of being able to accomplish that perilous

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## *A Strange Ally*

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feat. He knew that even if he should succeed in getting into the camp, it might be impossible to locate and reach Spotted Deer. For the moment he lost confidence. Then he suddenly realized that Spotted Deer had relied on him. The clews which he had left along the way took on a new significance. Running Fox accepted them as mute appeals for aid from the friend who more than once had risked death to help him. The thought stirred him. He determined to sacrifice his life if necessary in an attempt to free Spotted Deer.

"Getanittowit will help me," he murmured.

"It will be hard to get down to that place," Painted Hawk said, suddenly.

"There is a trail that goes down there, but it is very steep," Yellow Wolf told him. "A long time ago I was with some scouts, and we came over here and found out about this place."

"It would be foolish to follow that trail," Running Fox told them. "Perhaps the Shawnees are watching."

"Well, Running Fox, you are the leader, tell us what you propose to do," said Painted Hawk.

"I am going to ask Yellow Wolf and Dancing Owl to go down there with me," said Running Fox. "I am going to ask the rest of you to wait up here. I cannot tell you what we are going to do. I do not know how to get into that camp. I

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## *Spotted Deer*

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do not know how to find out about Spotted Deer. I am going down there to look around. If we do not come back before it gets light you will know that something bad has happened to us. If you hear the call of Gokhos three times, you must come to us. If you do not hear it, then you must wait until it gets light."

"We will keep your words," Painted Hawk told him. "If the Shawnees catch you, one of us will go and tell our people. Two will keep watching. Then we will bring a big war party to get you."

"It is good," said Running Fox. "Come, my friends, we will go."

A moment afterward the three daring scouts disappeared into the night. Their departure filled their friends with doubts. They knew the peril to which Running Fox and his companions were exposing themselves, and they had grave fears for their safety.

"Our brothers are brave," Painted Hawk declared, hopefully. "I believe they will fool the Shawnees. Yes, I believe we will see them again."

Running Fox made no attempt to find the trail of which Yellow Wolf had spoken, but turned directly down the side of the ridge. The way was steep and perilous, and they proceeded with great caution. The night was black and star-

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## *A Strange Ally*

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less and great Mauwallauwin hid behind the clouds. Running Fox was thankful for the darkness. He knew that it would make it easier to approach the Shawnee camp.

"Mauwallauwin is helping us," he said. "He has put away his light so that the Shawnees cannot see us."

When they finally reached the base of the ridge they stopped at the edge of the timber to watch and listen for their foes. They found a wide stretch of barren ground between them and the Shawnee village.

"That is a bad place," declared Dancing Owl. "If the Shawnees catch us out there, it will be hard to get away."

"We must be cautious," Running Fox told him.

Then as they heard nothing to alarm them, they left the shelter of the woods, and moved slowly across the open ground. As they approached the village they suddenly thought of the dogs. There was little doubt that some of them were prowling about outside the camp.

"If they smell us they will make a great noise," said Yellow Wolf.

Running Fox moistened his finger and held it above his head to test the wind. It came from the direction of the village. The discovery somewhat relieved their anxiety. There was

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## *Spotted Deer*

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less probability of the dogs catching their scent. Then they suddenly heard something which brought them to a standstill. It was the call of Gokhotit, the little red owl. It sounded over near the edge of the timber. It was a favorite signal between Spotted Deer and Running Fox. The latter thrilled as he heard it. A great hope rose in his heart. Twice it sounded softly through the night and then it ceased.

“Listen!” Running Fox whispered, excitedly. “That is a signal. I have heard Spotted Deer use it many times. Perhaps he is hiding over there. Come, we will go over there and find out who it is.”

They turned and hurried toward the place where they had heard the call. The possibility of finding Spotted Deer made their hearts beat wildly. As they drew near the timber they became more cautious. They realized that the call might have been made by a Shawnee, and they determined to be on their guard. When they finally came within bow-shot of the woods they stopped and listened. Then the call was repeated directly ahead of them. There was something weird and mysterious about it as it rose tremulously through the night.

“Now watch out!” Running Fox warned, as he fitted an arrow to his bow.

Then he replied to the signal. His call was

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## *A Strange Ally*

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soft and low and only sufficiently loud to reach the ears of the mysterious caller at the edge of the woods. The Delawares listened anxiously as it died away. A moment afterward they heard an answer. It, too, was low and guarded.

"It is mysterious," said Yellow Wolf.

"I believe it is Spotted Deer," declared Dancing Owl.

"Be cautious," Running Fox warned him.

Alert, and ready to defend themselves, they advanced carefully toward the timber. When they were within easy speaking distance they stopped. Then Running Fox called softly.

"Spotted Deer," he said.

"Spotted Deer is in the Shawnee village," replied a voice from the darkness.

It was the voice of a young boy or a woman and the Delawares turned to one another in surprise. For some moments they remained silent while they tried to solve the mystery. Many thoughts passed through their minds. Had some wily Shawnee scout discovered them and prepared a clever stratagem to lure them to their death? Had Spotted Deer found a friend among the Shawnees? Was it one of their own people? Before they could arrive at a decision the strange voice again sounded from the woods.

"Do not be afraid, Delawares," it said. "I have come here to help you. Perhaps I can

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## *Spotted Deer*

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save Spotted Deer. You must listen to my words."

"Who are you?" demanded Yellow Wolf.

"The Shawnees call me the Mystery Woman."

"It is a Medicine Person," Running Fox whispered, uneasily. "We must listen to her words. Perhaps she will help us."

"Do not try to kill me," said the mysterious person in the timber. "If you kill me, Spotted Deer will surely die."

"No, my friend, we will not kill you," Running Fox assured her.

"Then I will tell you what to do," she said.

"We will come over there and talk with you," proposed Running Fox.

"No, no, stay where you are," she commanded, impatiently. "Come, there is little time. Close your mouth and open your ears."

"We will listen," Running Fox told her.

"Well, Delawares, I will tell you that the Shawnees have caught your brother, Spotted Deer," she told them. "He is tied up in the Shawnee camp. You cannot reach him. Scouts are watching around the camp. If you try to get into the village you will surely be killed. Now listen sharp to what I am about to tell you. The Shawnees are going to kill Spotted Deer. They are going to kill him when the great chief

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## *A Strange Ally*

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Big Dog returns from the hunt. He will come before two suns pass. That is why I came here to find you. Spotted Deer says his people will come. He says his friend Running Fox will come."

"I am here," said Running Fox.

"It is good," she replied. "How many have come?"

The Delawares remained silent. The question made them suspicious. They feared that this mysterious woman might be attempting to gain information for their foes.

"Well, I see that you are cautious," she laughed. "It is good. Now I will tell you what to do. Red Dog will cross this ridge. He will come along a steep trail that comes down from the top of the ridge. Two great warriors will come with him. They are Many Beavers and Striking Bear. They are very brave. When those warriors come to the Shawnee village, Spotted Deer must die. If they do not come, perhaps I can help him. Now you know about it. I have finished."

"My friend, you have spoken big words," said Running Fox. "I do not know who you are but my heart is good toward you. I believe you are trying to help us. It is good."

They waited some moments but there was no response. The silence aroused their fears.

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## *Spotted Deer*

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They looked anxiously into the darkness. They listened for the approach of stealthy footsteps. There was no hint of danger.

"Come, my friend, give us some more words," Running Fox said, finally.

The appeal was futile. The strange voice had ceased. The Delawares became uneasy. They wondered if they had been conversing with one of the mysterious Medicine Beings. Then they heard the call of Gokhotit, the little red owl. It was far away toward the Shawnee village.

"She has gone," said Yellow Wolf.

"Perhaps she will tell Spotted Deer about us," Running Fox said, hopefully.

"Do you believe her words?" Dancing Owl asked, anxiously.

"Yes," said Running Fox. "I believe she came here to help us. I cannot tell about it. It is mysterious. Perhaps Getanittowit sent her here. I believe something good will come of it."

"Well, I do not know what to make of it," declared Dancing Owl. "Are you going to the Shawnee camp?"

"No," replied Running Fox. "I believe it would be foolish. It would be hard to get into that camp. If we go over there and get caught, Big Dog and his friends will come to the camp. Then we will all be killed. Anyway I believe

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*A Strange Ally*

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that strange woman is a Medicine Person. If we make her mad, much harm may come of it. I am going to turn around. We will go back and tell our brothers about it."

"It is the best thing to do," said Yellow Wolf.

## CHAPTER XIV

### WAITING AND WATCHING

**A**LTHOUGH the mysterious stranger had assured them that the trail to the top of the ridge was unguarded, the Delawares believed that the more difficult route through the woods might be safer. As they began the steep, exhausting climb, the clouds suddenly broke and Mauwallauwin flooded the valley with his soft, mystic light.

"It is a good sign," declared Running Fox. "Great Mauwallauwin has sent the light to show us the way."

When they finally reached the summit of the ridge they hastened to the spot where they had left their friends. The latter were greatly surprised at the sudden return.

"You have come back—it is good," said Painted Hawk. "Now I know that my brother Spotted Deer is alive."

"Yes, he is alive," Running Fox told him.

"Did you see him?" Crooked Foot asked, eagerly.

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## *Waiting and Watching*

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"No," replied Running Fox.

"Then how do you know about it?" Turning Eagle inquired, curiously.

"Listen, my friends, I will tell you about it," said Running Fox. "Something mysterious has happened to us. We were going to the Shawnee camp. Then we heard the call of Gokhotit, the little red owl. It is the signal which Spotted Deer makes. It was very soft. It came from the timber. We stopped. I began to think about Spotted Deer. Then we heard it again. We went toward the place where it was. We said, 'Perhaps it is Spotted Deer.' We could not tell about it. We were very cautious. When we got close, we got ready to fight. We said, 'Perhaps it is the Shawnees.' Then I made the call. Pretty soon we heard it come back. It was close by. Then I called out very soft. I said, 'Spotted Deer.' Pretty soon some one talked to us. 'Spotted Deer is in the Shawnee camp,' that person told us. It sounded like an old woman. We looked hard but we could not see any one. It was very dark. Perhaps that is why we could not see that person. Perhaps there was no one there. I cannot tell about it. It sounded mysterious. We kept still. We did not know what to do."

"Yes, yes, tell us about it," Turning Eagle said, eagerly, as Running Fox paused.

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## *Spotted Deer*

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"Well, my brothers, pretty soon that voice came again," said Running Fox. "It said, 'Do not be afraid, Delawares. I have come here to help you. Perhaps I can save Spotted Deer. You must listen to my words.'

"When we heard those words we did not know what to do. Then I called out. I said, 'Who are you?'

"The Shawnees call me the Mystery Woman," that voice told us.

"Then I said, 'It is a Medicine Person.'

"Well, my friends, then we listened sharp. That person told us what we went down there to find out about. Now I will tell you about it. Spotted Deer is tied up in the Shawnee camp. The Shawnees will kill him when Big Dog, the great Shawnee chief, returns from the hunt. Big Dog will cross this ridge. Big Dog will go down that trail that Yellow Wolf told us about. That mysterious person told us that we must not go to the camp. Scouts are watching around the village. That person told us we would surely be killed if we tried to go there."

"Then the voice stopped coming to us. We waited a long time. We listened sharp. We did not hear anything. Then I called out. Nothing came back. We waited a long time. Then I called out again. Nothing came back. Then we heard the call of Gokhotit, the little red

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## *Waiting and Watching*

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owl. It was far away near the Shawnee village. Then we turned around and came here. Now I have told you about it."

"Running Fox, if that person was a Medicine Person a great thing has happened to you," said Crooked Foot. "It is mysterious."

"My brothers, I do not like this thing," Painted Hawk declared, uneasily. "Perhaps that mysterious person was a Shawnee. Perhaps the Shawnees are trying to catch us. Perhaps they are trying to keep us here until a war party comes out from the village."

"Yes, I believe that is what they are trying to do," agreed Turning Eagle. "We must watch out."

"My friends, I do not believe the Shawnees had anything to do with it," Running Fox told them. "Perhaps it was a mysterious Medicine Person. Perhaps it was some one else. I do not know who it was. But I believe that person came there to help us. I believe the words of that person. Come, Yellow Wolf, you are a great warrior, tell us how you feel about it."

"Yes, Yellow Wolf, you heard this thing, tell us about it," urged Painted Hawk.

"My friends, I believe we must do what that person told us to do," said Yellow Wolf. "I do not know who it was but I believe what Running

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## *Spotted Deer*

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Fox says is true. I believe that person came there to help us."

"Running Fox, you are a great war leader; Yellow Wolf, you are a great scout; we will listen to your words," said Painted Hawk.

"It is good," replied Running Fox. "Now I will tell you what I propose to do. Yellow Wolf, you must lead us to that trail. Some of us will stay at the top. Some of us will go down and watch below. Two must watch. The rest must lie down and sleep. I will watch below. Yellow Wolf, you must watch at the top. If the Shawnees try to come up that trail, I will hear them. If Big Dog tries to go down that trail, Yellow Wolf will hear him. I will ask Painted Hawk and Turning Eagle to go with me. Crooked Foot and Dancing Owl must stay with Yellow Wolf."

Yellow Wolf led the way along the crest of the ridge until they came to the place where the steep, narrow trail wound down the hillside. Then they separated to carry out the instructions of Running Fox.

"If you hear the call of Gokhos three times, you will know that there is danger," Running Fox explained as he departed down the hillside.

The Delawares took turns at watching through the night, but they neither saw nor

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## *Waiting and Watching*

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heard anything to alarm them. At daylight they met at the top of the ridge. Then Running Fox announced another important discovery.

"My friends, when we were coming up here we found many tracks on that trail," he said. "Yes, Spotted Deer went down there. We found his tracks."

"How do you know that?" Painted Hawk asked, curiously.

"We saw some places where some one slid along," said Running Fox. "That person could not use his hands to hold himself back. Then we said, 'That person was a prisoner.' Then we knew it was Spotted Deer."

Having passed the night without alarm, and discovered signs which seemed to prove that Spotted Deer had passed along the trail, the Delawares became less suspicious of the mysterious stranger. It appeared as if her words had been verified.

"I believe what that mysterious person told us is true," said Turning Eagle.

"Well, she did not send the Shawnees here," said Running Fox. "Perhaps Big Dog will come. We must keep watching."

"Is Big Dog alone?" inquired Painted Hawk.

"No," said Running Fox. "Two warriors are with him. That mysterious person told us

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## *Spotted Deer*

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about them. They are Many Beavers and Striking Bear. She says they are very brave."

"If she knows these things, she must be a Shawnee," declared Crooked Foot. "If she is a Shawnee, I believe she is trying to fool us."

"I believe she knows these things because she is a great Medicine Person," Running Fox told him. "If she is a Shawnee, how does she know about that signal? Spotted Deer did not tell the Shawnees about it. My brothers, I do not know who that strange person is, but I believe she is working against the Shawnees. I believe she is trying to help us."

His confidence quieted the suspicions of his friends. They, too, began to rely upon the aid of the mysterious stranger. Having discovered them near the village, it was evident that she had concealed the fact from the Shawnees. The Delawares took hope in the thought.

"Well, we will wait here and see if her words come true," said Yellow Wolf.

"Yes, we will watch for Big Dog," Running Fox told him.

## CHAPTER XV

### AN EASY VICTORY

FOR some time the Delawares fixed their attention upon the Shawnee camp. They particularly noted the high log stockade which inclosed the village on three sides. The only approach was from the river.

"That is a bad place to get into," said Painted Hawk.

The others nodded a solemn assent. They realized that the crafty Shawnees had made their village almost impregnable, and there seemed to be little chance of freeing Spotted Deer.

"My friends, there is no use of feeling bad about this thing," Running Fox told them. "We came here to help Spotted Deer. We must go through with it."

"How do you propose to do this thing?" Painted Hawk asked him.

"I cannot tell you that until I find out about the Shawnee chief," said Running Fox.

At that moment their thoughts were diverted

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## *An Easy Victory*

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by the sudden appearance of three canoes. They had moved out from the shore and turned up the river. There were two paddlers in each canoe. The Delawares watched closely.

"It is bad," declared Painted Hawk. "Perhaps those warriors are going to meet their chief. Perhaps he will come to the camp in one of those canoes."

"No, I do not believe it," Running Fox told him. "That mysterious person says that Big Dog will cross the ridge. Then he must be coming from the-place-where-the-sun-appears. Those Shawnees are going toward Lowan, the Cold Place."

"Yes, that is true," said Yellow Wolf. "I do not believe they are going to meet Big Dog. I believe they are going up the river to hunt."

Somewhat relieved by the opinions of the two famous warriors, the little company of Delawares sought to banish the doubts which had entered their minds. They had great confidence in Running Fox and they believed he would find a way to overcome the difficulty. Their only fear was that he might have been deceived by the words of the stranger whom he had encountered near the Shawnee camp. Running Fox, however, seemed confident that she was attempting to help them.

They watched patiently through the day, but

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## *An Easy Victory*

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Big Dog and his friends failed to appear. Then as the evening shadows settled in the valley, they saw the three canoes returning to the camp. There were only two warriors in each canoe. The Delawares felt greatly relieved.

"Well, Big Dog did not come with them," said Painted Hawk. "See, Yellow Wolf. your words have come true."

The paddlers had come ashore, and were carrying the carcass of a deer or an elk toward the camp. It was evident that they were hunters. Having entered the village, they were immediately followed by a great company of people. They made a great commotion and the sounds of rejoicing reached the scouts on top of the ridge.

"They have brought meat—the Shawnees feel good," said Turning Eagle.

Then as darkness closed down and the fires began to twinkle in the Shawnee camp, Running Fox resolved to return to the base of the ridge. He hoped again to meet the mysterious stranger whom he had encountered the previous night. This time, however, he determined to go alone.

"My brothers, pretty soon I am going down there," he said. "Perhaps I will find that mysterious person. Perhaps she will tell me something different."

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## *Spotted Deer*

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Each of his friends was eager to accompany him. He refused them and insisted upon going alone.

"It is foolish to go down there alone," Crooked Foot warned him. "Perhaps that person will bring some Shawnees to catch you."

"I will be cautious," Running Fox assured him.

A few moments afterward he departed upon his perilous mission. He reached the base of the ridge in safety, and stopped to search the wide stretch of barren ground that surrounded the camp. The sky was clear and cloudless, and Mauwallauwin had driven the night shadows far back into the depths of the forest. Running Fox realized that it would be folly to expose himself in the open. He moved along at the edge of the timber until he approached the spot where he had encountered the stranger. Then he stopped to listen. He waited a long time but the only sounds came from the camp. Still he determined to loiter.

"Perhaps she will come," he told himself. Then he heard something moving through the woods behind him. He fitted an arrow to his bow and listened sharply. The warning of Crooked Foot suddenly came to his mind. He realized that he was exposing himself to great peril. The thought made him as alert and

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## *An Easy Victory*

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watchful as Nianque, the lynx. Having stationed himself in the shadows beneath a great spruce, he had little fear of being seen. The sound had ceased. Running Fox wondered if the prowler had become suspicious. Perhaps he, too, was listening. Then Running Fox heard the soft, querulous call of Gokhotit, the little red owl. It seemed within several bow-lengths of him. The signal thrilled him. He looked eagerly toward the sound but the caller was concealed in the darkness. Running Fox feared to reply. He listened anxiously for the sound of voices. The silence reassured him. It was evident that the caller was alone. Many moments passed, and still he remained silent. Then the call was repeated. It was a perfect imitation and Running Fox admired the skill of the one who had given it. Then he answered it. The notes had barely died away before the same weird voice addressed him from the night.

“You have come—it is good,” it said. “Are you alone?”

For a moment Running Fox hesitated to reply. The question made him suspicious. His silence seemed to anger the stranger.

“Come, come, do not be so cautious,” she said, irritably. “If you are afraid of me, run away like Muschgingus, the rabbit, and leave your brother to die.”

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## *Spotted Deer*

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The taunt roused his anger. He instantly accepted the challenge.

"Hi, woman, take care," he said, warningly. "Those are bad words to speak to a Delaware. Now listen to what I am going to tell you. I came here because I am not afraid of you. If you have something to tell me, speak. I will listen."

"It is good," said the stranger. "I see that you are brave like your brother, Spotted Deer. Well, my son, I will not bring any harm upon you. I have come here to tell you something. Now listen to my words."

"Wait," interrupted Running Fox. "Are you alone?"

"Yes."

"Then go over there in that light place and sit down."

"No, no, I am going to stay here," she insisted.

Her caution dispelled the suspicions of Running Fox. He realized that if she had intended to betray him into ambush she would have accepted his offer. He began to feel secure.

"Well, do as you like about it," he said.

"I have talked with your brother about you," she told him. "Spotted Deer feels strong because you are near. He says you will do something big. Now you must listen to my words.

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## *An Easy Victory*

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Do not try to go into that camp. It is useless. If you go there you will surely die with Spotted Deer. There is only one thing to do. You must watch until Big Dog comes. Then you must kill him. You must also kill those two great warriors. It will be a hard thing to do, but you must be strong. Then perhaps I will be able to get Spotted Deer out of the camp before the Shawnees kill him. There is not much time. They are talking bad against him. If Big Dog does not come into the camp before the third sun comes, I believe they will kill your brother."

"Woman, you speak big words," declared Running Fox. "I told my friends about them. They said, 'Perhaps that person is a Shawnee. Perhaps she is trying to fool you.' We have watched sharp. One sun has passed. Big Dog has not come."

"Listen, you Delaware," she said, angrily. "If you do not believe my words, then shake them from your ears and go away. One sun has passed. Another will soon come. Before that sun goes away Big Dog will cross that ridge. He will come down that trail. Now I have told you about it. If I get Spotted Deer out of the camp I will send him up there on the ridge to look for you. Tell your friends that they are foolish to talk against me. Pretty soon they will

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## *Spotted Deer*

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see that I have done a big thing for them. Now I am going away."

"Wait," urged Running Fox. "Tell me who you are? Do you live in the Shawnee camp?"

There was no response. Made reckless by his eagerness to learn the identity of his mysterious ally, he moved stealthily toward the spot where he had heard her. The maneuver was useless. She had gone.

"Well, she must be a great Medicine Person," Running Fox told himself. "I believe she will give me power to help Spotted Deer."

Encouraged by the thought, he hastened away to take her message to his friends. He had barely begun to climb when he heard the dogs barking furiously at the Shawnee camp. He stopped and listened uneasily. Then, as the racket ended as suddenly as it began, he wondered if the strange Mystery Woman had entered the village.

"My friends, I have talked with that mysterious person and nothing bad has happened to me," Running Fox told his companions. "Now I know that she is trying to help us."

"Tell us her words," Painted Hawk said, eagerly.

"She says that Spotted Deer knows about us," Running Fox told them. "She says that he feels strong about it. She says that Big Dog

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## *An Easy Victory*

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and his brothers will cross this bridge before the next sun goes away. She says we must stop them. She says if they get away, Spotted Deer must die. My brothers, I believe the words of that mysterious person. I believe she is a good friend."

"Do you know who she is?" inquired Painted Hawk.

"No," replied Running Fox. "When I asked her about it she went away. I crept ahead to stop her. When I got there she was gone. It is mysterious. It must be that she is a great Medicine Person."

"Well, if she feels good toward us, perhaps she will give us power to do big things," Dancing Owl suggested, hopefully. "Perhaps she will tell us how to get into the Shawnee camp."

"No, I do not believe she will tell us how to do that," said Running Fox. "She says it would be a foolish thing to do. She says we would be killed. She says we must catch Big Dog. Then she will try to get Spotted Deer away."

"Pretty soon we will see if her words come true," said Turning Eagle.

They again took turns at watching, but the night passed without incident. They became convinced that the Shawnees were ignorant of their presence on the ridge. It seemed certain,

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## *Spotted Deer*

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therefore, that the mysterious stranger had failed to betray them to their foes.

"Well, my brothers, if that mysterious person did not tell the Shawnees about us she must be trying to help us," said Painted Hawk. "I do not know what to make of it. I believe she must be a Medicine Person. Perhaps Getanittowit sent her here to do this thing."

As the sun rose above the eastern hills, the Delawares suddenly realized that the fate of Spotted Deer might be settled before it finally crossed the sky and disappeared into the west. The thought made them serious. If the words of their unknown ally proved true, they believed that the life of their friend depended upon their vigilance. If the Shawnee chief eluded them, they feared that Spotted Deer would die before the dawn of another day. Having learned that the chief and his companions were expected to approach from the east, they turned their attention to that side of the ridge.

Then, as they waited for the appearance of their foes, Running Fox began to study the possibilities for saving Spotted Deer. A number of disquieting questions rose in his mind. Suppose they should kill Big Dog and his companions, would the mysterious Medicine Person be able to delay the execution of Spotted Deer? He had strong doubts of it. She had warned

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## *An Easy Victory*

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him that the Shawnees were growing impatient. She believed that if Big Dog failed to arrive at the camp before another sun rose, the Shawnees would kill Spotted Deer. The possibility filled Running Fox with alarm. He suddenly determined that it would be a blunder to kill the Shawnee chief.

"See, my friends, the sun is high overhead," said Running Fox. "The day is passing. Pretty soon Big Dog and his friends will come. Yes, I believe we will see them before the sun goes away. Now I will give you some words. I feel different about this thing. I believe it would be foolish to kill Big Dog and his friends. We must catch them and keep them alive. It will be a hard thing to do but I believe it is the only way to save Spotted Deer. I am the leader. You must do as I tell you."

His companions turned to him in amazement. They wondered if their ears had deceived them. It seemed impossible that Running Fox could have arrived at such an astounding decision. They waited for an explanation.

"My brothers, I see that my words sound bad in your ears," he said. "It is because you do not know what I propose to do. I cannot tell you that, until we catch the Shawnee chief. Now I will tell you what you must do. I will ask Yellow Wolf and Dancing Owl to stay over here

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## *Spotted Deer*

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with me. The rest of you must hide along the other side of the trail. Put away your bows. Keep your war clubs in your hands. If Big Dog and his friends walk between us, rush out and strike them down. Strike hard enough to make them sleep, but do not try to kill them. Then I will tell you what to do."

At that moment Dancing Owl placed his finger across his lips and pointed warningly down the eastern side of the ridge. The Delawares listened in great suspense. Then they heard voices. Some one was climbing up the slope.

"Hide yourselves!" whispered Running Fox.

They separated, and concealed themselves on each side of the trail. They held their war clubs in their hands and watched anxiously for the appearance of the three Shawnee hunters. It was not long before they heard them close at hand.

"Get ready," Running Fox cautioned his companions.

A moment later the Shawnees appeared. The Delawares were overjoyed to see each of their foes bowed beneath a heavy load of game. It was a severe handicap, and placed the Shawnees at a great disadvantage. They were panting heavily from their exertions in climbing the ridge. Having reached the top, they stopped and looked upon the camp. The Delawares

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## *An Easy Victory*

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waited in breathless suspense. They feared that at any moment the Shawnees might raise a shout to announce their return. As the possibility filled him with fear, Running Fox was tempted to drive his arrows through them. At that instant, however, the Shawnees turned and approached the trail.

The Delawares were well hidden, and they had little fear of being seen. The Shawnees showed no signs of suspicion. They came to the head of the trail and turned to follow it down the hillside. At that instant Running Fox gave the signal and the Delawares rushed from cover. The astounded Shawnees had little chance to defend themselves. Hampered by their heavy packs, they were attacked with a grim, silent ferocity that threw them into confusion. Before they could rally they were struck down.

“Come, pull off these packs!” cried Running Fox, as he dropped to his knees beside his unconscious foe and began untying the pack thongs.

When the Shawnees regained consciousness some time later, they found themselves powerless. Their feet and hands were tightly bound with the rawhide thongs from the packs, and they were gagged with heavy pieces of buckskin which had been cut from their shirts. Unable to move or speak, they glared defiantly into the

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## *Spotted Deer*

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faces of the triumphant Delawares who stooped over them and laughed gleefully. Then they seized their helpless captives and carried them some distance along the ridge.

“It is good,” laughed Turning Eagle. “The mysterious—”

“Sh,” Running Fox cautioned, “the Shawnees have ears.”

“Yes, yes, be cautious,” warned Yellow Wolf.

## CHAPTER XVI

### A DARING RUSE

FOR some time the Delawares studied the prisoners in silence. Then Dancing Owl suddenly recognized one of them. He was one of the warriors who had captured him the year before. The hot-tempered young Delaware immediately began to taunt and tantalize his foe.

"Well, Shawnee, I have caught you," he laughed. "How do you feel about it? Do you know who I am? Yes, yes, I see that you are afraid of me. You were very fierce when you caught me. Perhaps I will kill you. Then we will see how brave you are."

His friends listened with delight. They laughed scornfully as the enraged Shawnee glared helplessly at his conqueror. Then they attempted to identify Big Dog, the Shawnee chief. Running Fox realized that unless he could learn which of the prisoners was Big Dog, it would be impossible to carry out the daring plan by which he hoped to rescue Spotted Deer.

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## *Spotted Deer*

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He studied the Shawnees with great care. They seemed about of an age. All were men in the full prime of life. Two were of strong and muscular physique. The third was lithe and sinewy. The latter was the one whom Dancing Owl had recognized. All had the stern, fearless face and bold eyes of the seasoned warrior. As there was no distinction in dress or bearing, Running Fox found nothing to guide him to a decision. He resolved to consult his friends.

"Turning Eagle, stay here and watch," he said. "Come, my brothers, follow me."

When they were safely beyond hearing of their foes, the five Delawares seated themselves to talk.

"My brothers, we have done a good thing," said Running Fox. "The words of that mysterious Medicine Person have come true. She is a good friend. We must try to find out who she is. But first we must find out about Big Dog. I cannot go ahead with what I intend to do until I find out which one of those warriors is Big Dog. Do any of you know him?"

His friends shook their heads.

"Well, can any of you pick him out?"

"Did the Medicine Person tell you how to know him?" inquired Painted Hawk.

"No," said Running Fox. "I was foolish. I did not ask about it."

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## *A Daring Ruse*

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"It will be a hard thing to find out," declared Crooked Foot. "I looked sharp at those warriors but I cannot tell you what you wish to know."

"I do not believe that warrior I talked to is Big Dog," said Dancing Owl. "He was not the leader of those warriors who caught me. A great chief is always the leader."

"Yes, yes, that is true," agreed his companions. "One of the others must be Big Dog."

Running Fox had already reached that conclusion. He was glad to hear it indorsed by his friends. Still he realized that even with one of the warriors eliminated it would be quite as difficult to learn which of the others was Big Dog. Aware that a mistake might prove fatal, he resolved to do nothing until he became certain of the identity of the Shawnee chief.

"My friends, we must be sure about this thing," he said. "Now I will tell you how to find out about it. Yellow Wolf, you speak Shawnee words. You must talk to those warriors. Be sharp. Try to catch them."

"Yes, Yellow Wolf, you must try to fool them," said Crooked Foot.

"Well, I will see what I can do about it," agreed Yellow Wolf.

They rose and returned to the prisoners. The sun was dropping toward the western

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*Spotted Deer*

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ridges. The day was far spent. Running Fox was impatient. He had planned to make his bold attempt to free Spotted Deer early in the night. He realized that there was little time to learn what he wished to know. He watched anxiously as Yellow Wolf approached the Shawnees and addressed them in their dialect.

"Come, come, Big Dog, open your eyes," he said, sharply, as he studied the faces of his foes.

Two of the Shawnees glanced quickly at their companion. His face clouded with anger. Yellow Wolf laughed and turned to Running Fox.

"There is the great chief Big Dog," he said, as he pointed toward the Shawnee who had been betrayed by his friends.

"It is good," declared Running Fox.

As Turning Eagle continued to watch the prisoners, the other Delawares again withdrew to talk. Then Running Fox explained his plans.

"Yellow Wolf, you are as sly as Sanquen, the weasel," he laughed. "My brothers, Yellow Wolf found out what we wished to know. It is good. Now I will tell you what I propose to do. I am going to talk to those Shawnees. I am going to tell them about Spotted Deer. I am going to tell them that they must help us. I am going to ask one of those warriors to go to the Shawnee village with me. I am going to ask

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## *A Daring Ruse*

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him to talk to his people. When he gives them my words, I believe they will let Spotted Deer walk out."

"Running Fox, if you do this thing I believe you will surely be killed," Painted Hawk declared, soberly.

"That Shawnee will tell his people to kill you," said Dancing Owl.

"No, I do not believe it," replied Running Fox. "Come, we will go and tell the Shawnees about it. You must listen sharp to my words."

When they reached the captives, Running Fox stooped and stared steadily into the face of Big Dog. The eyes of the Shawnee blazed with hate. The Delaware straightened and began to speak.

"Big Dog, do you know the words of my people?" he asked.

The Shawnee gave no sign that he understood. Running Fox felt sure that he was attempting to deceive. He waited some moments, and then he resumed speaking.

"If you do not know my words there is no chance for you," he said. "I have come here to give you a chance for your life. Now listen sharp to what I am about to tell you. Your people have caught my brother, Spotted Deer. He is tied up in your village. I believe your people are about to kill him. If they kill him

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## *Spotted Deer*

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you must die. We have come here to take Spotted Deer away. You are a great chief. If you speak to your people they will listen. You must tell them to let Spotted Deer go. If you do that no harm will come to you. Come, be quick, give me a sign."

For several moments the Shawnee remained motionless. Then he glanced at his companions. His eyes questioned them. The Delawares watched closely. Would he yield? Their hopes died as the stern Shawnee chief stared defiantly at Running Fox. The latter still waited. He began to wonder if the Shawnee really understood his words.

"Well, Shawnee, I see that we must kill you," he said, finally. "Come, my brothers, the foolish Shawnees wish to die."

The Delawares drew their bows and advanced upon the captives. The latter gave no evidence of fear. Running Fox watched anxiously. He knew that unless he could force the Shawnees to agree to his terms there was slight chance of saving Spotted Deer. It was apparent, however, that Big Dog and his companions intended to defy him. The thought suddenly roused him into a temper. His face grew dark with anger, and his eyes flashed dangerously. He jerked his bow into position and fitted an arrow. Then he drew back the bow-string and aimed the ar-

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## *A Daring Ruse*

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row at the heart of Big Dog. At that instant the chief slowly raised himself. Running Fox lowered his bow. His eyes lighted with hope.

"Well, Shawnee, I see that you wish to speak," he said. "It is good. We will listen to your words. But first I will tell you something. If you try to call out when I take that thing away from your mouth I will shoot my arrow through you. Remember those words."

Big Dog nodded. Then Running Fox began to untie the buckskin gag. The other Shawnees watched with interest. It was some moments before Big Dog spoke.

"I heard your words," he said, brusquely.

"Well, how do you feel about it?" inquired Running Fox.

"I will do this thing," said Big Dog.

"It is good," Running Fox told him. "Now you must listen sharp. I know about your brothers. They are Many Beavers and Striking Bear. Do they know my words?"

"Many Beavers knows your words," said Big Dog, as he exchanged glances with the warrior beside him.

"My brothers, let Many Beavers speak," said Running Fox.

Many Beavers sat up and the Delawares removed the gag from his mouth. Then Yellow Wolf drew his knife and sat close beside him.

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## *Spotted Deer*

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"If you try to call out I will kill you," he said.

"Now, Shawnees, I will tell you how to keep your lives," Running Fox told them. "I am going into your village with Many Beavers. He must carry the words of Big Dog to his people. He must tell them that Big Dog is a prisoner. He must tell them that, if any harm comes to me, Big Dog will die. He must tell them that Big Dog says to let Spotted Deer walk away with me. He must tell them that if I do not take Spotted Deer to my people before the next sun comes, Big Dog and Striking Bear will die. You have heard my words. If you do this thing we will give you your lives. If anything bad comes of it you must die. I have finished."

Running Fox ceased speaking and watched the Shawnees. For some moments they remained silent. They appeared to be studying his plan. At last Big Dog spoke.

"What you propose to do is foolish," he said. "If you go into my village with Many Beavers, my people will surely kill you. I am the only one who can save you. There is only one way to do this thing. You must go to the village with all three of us. Then no harm will come to you. Then I will tell my people to let your brother walk out. Delaware, I am a great chief.

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## *A Daring Ruse*

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I know about these things. I have told you the best way to do it."

"Shawnee, I am laughing at you," Running Fox told him. "Do you believe you can fool me with those words? No, I will not talk about them. I have told you how to keep your life. Now you must answer. Will you do as I tell you?"

"Yes, I will go to the camp with you," Big Dog replied, craftily.

"Many Beavers will go with me," Running Fox said, angrily. "You will stay here with Striking Bear until I bring back Spotted Deer. Come, I will not talk any more. Will you do this thing?"

"Well, if you wish to throw away your life, I will not stop you," laughed Big Dog.

## CHAPTER XVII

### SPOTTED DEER OBTAINS HIS FREEDOM

**A**T the end of the day the Delawares noted sudden activity in the Shawnee camp. It convinced them that the Shawnees were preparing for some unusual event. The village was brightly lighted by several great fires, and the people appeared to be gathering for an important ceremony.

"It is bad," said Painted Hawk. "Something big is going on down there. Perhaps the Shawnees are about to kill Spotted Deer."

"Yes, it is bad," agreed Crooked Foot.

"Perhaps the Shawnees are getting ready for Big Dog," suggested Dancing Owl.

Running Fox offered no opinion. The sudden bustle in the Shawnee camp had aroused his suspicions. He was unwilling to express the fears which had crept into his heart.

"Come, Running Fox, what do you make of it?" Yellow Wolf asked him.

"I believe Spotted Deer is in danger," said

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## *Spotted Deer Obtains His Freedom*

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Running Fox. "There is no time to spare. I must go."

He hurried to the Shawnee captives. Turning Eagle was watching them. As Running Fox approached, Turning Eagle came to meet him.

"Big Dog and Many Beavers have been talking," he said.

Running Fox seemed unimpressed. He had slight doubt that the crafty Shawnees had discussed the possibility of betraying him into the hands of their people. The thought caused him little anxiety. Having made it plain that his peril was their peril, he believed that they would heed the warning.

"Many Beavers, I have some words for you," he told the Shawnee. "I am going to untie you. I am going with you to the Shawnee camp. If any harm comes to me, Big Dog and Striking Bear will die. If I do not bring back Spotted Deer before another sun comes, then they must die. Now you know about it. If you let your people kill me, you will know that they are also killing your brothers. I have spoken."

He stooped and freed Many Beavers. Then he ordered him to rise. The Shawnee obeyed. The Delawares watched suspiciously. They had serious misgivings about the outcome of the adventure.

"My brothers, keep my words," said Running

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## *Spotted Deer*

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Fox. "If I do not bring Spotted Deer here before the next sun comes, then you must kill these Shawnees. Then you must go to our people and tell them that I have followed Spotted Deer on the Long Trail."

Then he disappeared into the night with Many Beavers. They followed the steep, hazardous trail toward the river. Mauwallauwin gave them light, but the way was difficult and dangerous. The Shawnee walked ahead. He was without weapons. Running Fox followed close behind him. He was armed with bow and arrows. They traveled in silence. When they reached the end of the trail, the Shawnee led the way across the open stretch of beach that led to the camp.

As they finally drew near the village, they heard sounds which told them that a celebration of some sort was in progress. Running Fox grew anxious. He wondered if he had come too late to save Spotted Deer. A wild chorus of shouts rang through the night, and his courage weakened at the sound. The Shawnee suddenly stopped. Running Fox feared treachery.

"Something big is happening," Many Beavers told him. "I will go ahead and find out about it. Then I will come back and tell you about it."

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## *Spotted Deer Obtains His Freedom*

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"No," Running Fox said, sharply. "I will go with you."

"It is bad," the Shawnee warned him. "Perhaps my people are mad. If you go in there they may kill you."

"Big Dog and Striking Bear are on the ridge," Running Fox reminded him, significantly. "I am not afraid. Go into the camp. I will follow you."

Aware that further words would be useless, the Shawnee moved rapidly toward the entrance to the camp. Running Fox followed boldly after him. A few moments later they entered the village. The Shawnees were gathered about a great fire. They suddenly subsided into silent amazement at sight of Many Beavers and his companion. Many Beavers walked directly toward them.

"Keep close beside me," he warned Running Fox.

Once they had identified the Delaware, the Shawnees rushed toward him, calling out threateningly. Many Beavers held up his hand and called out in strong, commanding tones. The Shawnees became quiet. They crowded eagerly about the two warriors and began to speak excitedly to their tribesmen. Running Fox ignored them. He had suddenly discovered Spotted Deer tied to a stake near the fire.

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## *Spotted Deer*

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Everything else was forgotten. Spotted Deer was apparently unable to see him in the midst of the Shawnees.

"He is alive—it is enough," Running Fox murmured, thankfully.

In the meantime several warriors whom he took to be chiefs had made their way to Many Beavers. They were talking earnestly and the Delaware believed that Many Beavers was giving them the message from Big Dog. He watched closely. Many Beavers waved his arm toward the ridge. He was speaking seriously. The Shawnees showed interest. Then Many Beavers spoke to Running Fox.

"This man is Walking Bear," he said. "He is a great war leader. He will give you some words."

"Delaware, I see you have come to die with your brother," said the Shawnee.

"Those words do not frighten me," Running Fox replied, angrily. "Many Beavers has told you what brings me here. I will not talk about it. Your great chief, Big Dog, and your brother, Striking Bear, are with my people. Do you wish to see them? Then go over there and untie my brother. If we do not go back to that place, your brothers will die. I have finished."

"Hi, Delaware, you speak big words," laughed the Shawnee leader.

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## *Spotted Deer Obtains His Freedom*

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At that moment a wild, hysterical laugh echoed through the camp. Then an old woman pushed her way through the crowd, and confronted Running Fox. She was a fiercee-looking old creature. For a moment she stared searchingly into his face. Then she turned and addressed the Shawnees. Running Fox longed to know what she said.

“My people, what I dreamed about has come true,” cried the old Mystery Woman. “Big Dog is in great danger. You must be careful what you do. Perhaps I can do something to save him. You must listen to my words and do as I tell you.”

Her words filled Running Fox with excitement. He had suddenly recognized her voice. He felt sure that she was the mysterious Medicine Woman who had told him about Big Dog. He would have given much to have understood her words. The Shawnees were giving her serious attention. Running Fox took hope.

“She is talking against you,” Many Beavers said, treacherously.

Running Fox betrayed no interest. He felt sure, however, that the strange old Medicine Woman would prove a valuable ally. Then Walking Bear, the Shawnee war leader, approached Running Fox and attempted to take

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*Spotted Deer*

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his bow. Running Fox drew back threateningly.

"Come, Delaware, give me that bow," the Shawnee cried, angrily.

When Running Fox refused, Walking Bear called to his people, and several warriors rushed forward and seized the Delaware. They took away his weapons and threw him to the ground. The Shawnees crowded forward to attack him, but Many Beavers and the war leader held them back. Then they tied his hands behind him and permitted him to rise. Running Fox remained calm. He smiled scornfully as the Shawnees led him toward the fire.

"My brother, I see that the Shawnees have caught you," Spotted Deer said, sadly. "It is bad. I am to blame for this. I have brought you here to die."

"No, my brother, we will not die," Running Fox assured him. "I have come here to take you away."

"How can you do that?" Spotted Deer asked, with surprise.

"Watch and listen," said Running Fox.

Many Beavers was talking to the Shawnee leaders. In a few moments he accompanied them to a big lodge near the center of the camp. Most of the Shawnees followed them. A number of warriors, however, seated themselves near

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## *Spotted Deer Obtains His Freedom*

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the Delawares. The latter had little doubt that the Shawnees had gone to hold a council.

"Pretty soon they will let us walk out," Running Fox said, confidently.

The warriors who were guarding them made it plain that they did not wish them to talk. As the Delawares realized that it might be dangerous to defy them, they became quiet. Then they waited anxiously for the Shawnees to come from the lodge. Several times they heard the voice of the old Mystery Woman. Each of the Delawares longed to tell his friend about her, but feared that the Shawnees who were on guard might understand.

The night was half gone when the Shawnees finally came from the council lodge. They moved silently toward the fire, and seated themselves in a great circle about the Delawares. Then Many Beavers and Walking Bear approached Running Fox. Walking Bear began to speak.

"Delawares, listen to my words," he said. "You have asked us to do a big thing. You are a Delaware. The Delawares are our enemies. The words of our enemies are bad. If we do as you tell us you will go back and kill our brothers. No, Delaware, the Shawnees are not so foolish. Now I will tell you what our people propose to do. You must go back and bring

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## *Spotted Deer*

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Big Dog and Striking Bear to the river. Then you must make the call of Gokhos, the owl. Then we will send some warriors and your brother out there to meet you. Then we will let our brother walk away with you. Then Big Dog and Striking Bear will come to the camp. It is the only way to save yourself."

"It is useless," said Running Fox. "I see what you are trying to do. You cannot catch us so easy. I have given you my words. A Delaware will carry out what he proposes to do. If you let my brother walk out with me, your chief and Striking Bear will come back to you. If you do not do this thing, they will die when the next sun appears. There is no use of talking any more about it. The night is half gone. That ridge is a long ways off. There is little time. Tell me what you propose to do."

"Yes, Delaware, I will tell you!" Walking Bear shouted, furiously. "I intend to kill you. Then I will lead a war party to kill your friends on that ridge. That is what I propose to do."

He turned and began a fiery speech to his people. His words brought them to their feet, and roused them into a passion. As he continued speaking, they began to cry out and shake their fists at the Delawares. It was evident that the Shawnee war leader was deliberately inciting them to scorn the warning of Many

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## *Spotted Deer Obtains His Freedom*

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Beavers and take vengeance upon their foes. As he finished talking, most of the warriors ran to the lodges and returned with their weapons. Then they formed a circle about the Delawares. Running Fox was seized and bound to the stake with Spotted Deer.

"Listen, you great war leader," Running Fox called out, sarcastically. "I know that you are trying to frighten me. I am laughing at you. You are afraid to kill me. You have heard the words of your brother, Many Beavers. Now I will tell you that whatever your people do to us, we will do to your brothers. Now do as you feel like doing."

At that moment Many Beavers began to speak. His voice was low and calm and it was apparent that he was attempting to pacify the Shawnees. However, as Walking Bear had thoroughly aroused them, the words of Many Beavers seemed to have little effect.

The warriors had already begun to circle about the stake, and as Spotted Deer had passed through two similar ordeals he knew what to expect. This time, however, he feared that the excited Shawnees might actually take his life. Running Fox, too, was beginning to feel less confident. The Shawnees were apparently relying upon some wily stratagem to save their tribesmen while they seemed determined to kill

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*Spotted Deer*

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their foes. Running Fox wondered if a war party had secretly left the camp. The thought filled him with alarm.

Then as the warriors began to dance about the stake and brandish their weapons, the old Mystery Woman suddenly appeared before the Shawnees. She looked like one demented. Her eyes were wild and staring, her wrinkled yellow face was drawn with emotion and her short, white locks were rumpled in wild disorder. She pointed a bony arm at the Shawnees and began to shout wildly. The dancers stopped to listen. The Shawnees looked upon her in superstitious awe.

"Shawnees, Shawnees, Shawnees!" she screamed. "Think what you are about to do. You are about to throw away the life of Big Dog. You are about to throw away the life of the great warrior, Striking Bear. What will those great men think about you? I saw this thing in a dream. I told you about it. You wiped away my words. Now you are about to bring many bad days upon us. There is only one way to do. You must do as Many Beavers tells you to do. There is no other way. Big Dog is depending upon you. Striking Bear is depending upon you. They are saying, 'We are Shawnees. It is good. The Shawnees will not throw us away.' Are you going to give them to

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## *Spotted Deer Obtains His Freedom*

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our enemies, the boastful Delawares? Are you going to let those people say, 'See how brave we are; we killed the great chief, Big Dog. The Shawnees were not sharp enough to save him.' How will you feel about that? You saw me try to kill that boastful young Delaware. Now I am glad I did not do it. If that foolish young warrior was not here, we could not save Big Dog. Are two Delaware boys worth as much as two great Shawnee warriors? No, no, no! Let them walk away. You call me a great Mystery Woman. Then listen to my words. Time is short. Let them run to that ridge and save our brothers. I know about this thing. It is good. They will do as they propose to do. I have made their hearts good to do this thing. It is the only way I can save Big Dog. Shawnees, you must listen to my words."

The Delawares felt sure she was speaking in their behalf. They believed that she had won the confidence of the Shawnees. They had begun to talk seriously among themselves. Many Beavers and the war leaders had called the warriors about them. The wild ceremony at the fire had suddenly come to an end. For the moment the Delawares were left alone. The old Mystery Woman rushed over to them and shook her finger in the face of Running Fox. She twisted

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## *Spotted Deer*

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her face into an ugly snarl, but her words were low and friendly.

"If you get away you must send those Shawnees to the camp," she said. "If you harm them I must die."

"I will send them," Running Fox promised her. "Be quick, tell me who you are."

"He knows," she murmured, as she rushed upon Spotted Deer and pretended to claw at his eyes.

Then Many Beavers and the war leader approached, and she hurried away. For some moments the Shawnees stared sullenly upon their foes. Then Walking Bear stepped forward and freed the Delawares from the stake. He showed no inclination to unbind their hands.

"Delawares, we will let you walk away," he said. "We will see if a Delaware will do as he proposes to do. If you kill Big Dog and Striking Bear, we will surely come and wipe away your people. Go, and send our brothers."

"Untie my hands," Running Fox commanded, fiercely.

"No," said Walking Bear.

"Then I will wait here and let your brothers die," said Running Fox.

"Come, come, untie his hands—there is little time," Many Beavers said, irritably.

He called a young warrior to free the Dela-

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## *Spotted Deer Obtains His Freedom*

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wares. Then he motioned for them to go.

"Wait," said Running Fox. "I came here with a bow and some good arrows. I will take them away."

"Yes, I, too, had a good bow and some arrows and a good robe," declared Spotted Deer. "You must give them to me."

The Shawnees finally returned the weapons but refused to surrender the robe. The Delawares realized that it might be perilous to insist upon its return. They walked slowly toward the end of the camp while the Shawnees taunted and threatened, but made no attempt to harm them.

"Shawnees, listen to my words," Running Fox cried out, as he turned at the end of the village. "You are sharp. Perhaps you will try to do something. If you follow us, your chief will never come back."

The next moment the Delawares disappeared into the night.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### SHAWNEE TREACHERY

ONCE outside of the camp the Delawares hurried toward the timber at top speed. They were fearful, and suspicious of the Shawnees, as they believed that a large war party might set out to follow them to the ridge.

"We must watch out, the Shawnees are sly," warned Running Fox.

"Yes, yes," agreed Spotted Deer.

"Do you know about that old Medicine Woman?" Running Fox inquired.

"Yes, I know about her," Spotted Deer told him.

"Who is she?" Running Fox asked, eagerly.

"She is White Crane—she is a Minsi," said Spotted Deer.

Running Fox immediately stopped. He turned excitedly to Spotted Deer.

"Then she is one of our people!" he cried.

"Yes," replied Spotted Deer.

"We must help her," said Running Fox.

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## *Shawnee Treachery*

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"Come, we are Delawares. We will go back there and take her away."

"No, it would be useless," Spotted Deer told him. "She will not go. I talked with her about it. She says she has been there a long time. The Shawnees believe she is a great Medicine Person. They listen to her words. She has everything good. She is very old. She says she cannot travel. She says she wants to die in the Shawnee camp."

"Well, then, we must leave her," agreed Running Fox.

As they moved across the long stretch of open ground they kept sharp watch behind them. The moonlight made it possible to see for a considerable distance, and they expected at any moment to discover a company of Shawnees following rapidly on their trail. They heard a bedlam of confused sounds from the camp, and had little doubt that the Shawnees were gathered in noisy council to plan some wily stratagem which might turn their chagrin into joy.

"I believe it will be hard to get away from those people," Running Fox said, uneasily. "They are very mad because we fooled them. I believe they will try to catch us."

Spotted Deer struggled along in silence. His limbs were stiff and swollen as the result of the tight binding to which he had been subjected in

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## *Spotted Deer*

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the Shawnee camp. Each stride caused him agony, but he made no mention of his suffering. Several times, however, he lurched against Running Fox, and at last the latter guessed that something was wrong.

"Hi, I see you are falling around," he said anxiously. "Did the Shawnees hurt you?"

"It is my legs," Spotted Deer said, lightly. "The Shawnees gave me the legs of an old man."

Running Fox grew thoughtful. He understood the plight of his friend, and it filled him with alarm. He feared that Spotted Deer might be unable to make the long, swift journey to the Delaware camp. Spotted Deer seemed to have guessed his thoughts.

"Do not be afraid," he said. "I will keep going."

"You are brave," said Running Fox.

They were nearing the timber along the base of the ridge when they suddenly heard the shrill, piercing scream of Nianque, the lynx. It seemed to have come from the camp. They stopped to listen. It filled them with dread.

"It is the signal of the Shawnees," Spotted Deer said, softly. "I heard it when I was coming down the river."

"It means something bad," declared Running Fox. "Come, we will get into the woods."

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## *Shawnee Treachery*

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"Perhaps some Shawnees are hiding over there," suggested Spotted Deer.

"Yes," said Running Fox. "We must be cautious."

They reached the timber in safety, and moved cautiously along the bottom of the ridge. The night was far gone and there was little time to spare. Running Fox knew that unless he reached his friends before sunrise, they would surely kill Big Dog and his companion. Having given his word to the old Mystery Woman, Running Fox was determined to save them. He decided, therefore, that the Shawnee trail would offer the quickest and easiest way to reach the top of the ridge.

"Did you come along here?" he asked Spotted Deer, as they began to climb.

"Yes," said Spotted Deer. "My hands were tied and I had a hard time of it."

"We found your marks," Running Fox told him. "Did the old Mystery Woman tell you about us?"

"Yes," said Spotted Deer. "She told me you came here to help me. Running Fox, it was a great thing to do. You are a brave warrior and a good friend. You risked your life to help me. It makes me feel big. I will think about it when I am an old man. When the Mystery Woman told me about you I felt very strong. I said,

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## *Spotted Deer*

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'Running Fox will get me out of this.' Now you have done it."

"Spotted Deer, you are my brother—it is enough," said Running Fox.

Dawn was showing in the east when they finally neared the end of the trail. Running Fox stopped and imitated the bark of Woakus, the fox. He expected an immediate response. It failed to come. He listened uneasily. The silence aroused his suspicions. In a few moments he repeated the signal. Many moments passed. The baffling silence continued.

"It is mysterious," he whispered.

"Are our people here?" Spotted Deer asked, anxiously.

"Yes, they were close by," Running Fox assured him.

Fear had suddenly gripped his heart. He was perplexed and startled by the strange silence of his comrades. It suggested alarming possibilities. Perhaps the Shawnees had escaped. It seemed impossible. Perhaps a company of Shawnees had found and overpowered Yellow Wolf and his companions. His courage weakened at the thought.

"Something bad has happened," he told Spotted Deer. "We must watch out."

"Listen," whispered Spotted Deer.

A twig had snapped somewhere in the under-

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## *Shawnee Treachery*

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growth beside the trail. They fitted arrows to their bows, and looked expectantly into the shadows. The woods were still dark, and it was impossible to see into the cover. They listened in trying suspense. Then they heard the low, plaintive notes of the little white-throated sparrow. It was close at hand. Running Fox took hope.

"It must be Yellow Wolf; that is his signal," he said.

"Be cautious," Spotted Deer warned him.

Running Fox imitated the song. It had barely died away before they heard a familiar voice from the edge of the woods.

"Running Fox?" it queried, softly.

"I am here," replied Running Fox.

A moment afterward Yellow Wolf stood beside them. He grasped the hand of Spotted Deer. Then he led the way into the woods. They followed him in silence. He took them to the spot where Running Fox had left the prisoners. There was no one there.

"What has happened?" Running Fox asked, in alarm.

"Everything is good," Yellow Wolf assured him. "Come."

He led them a considerable distance farther along the ridge, where they found Turning Eagle and the Shawnee prisoners. Painted

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## *Spotted Deer*

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Hawk and Crooked Foot and Dancing Owl were missing.

"Where are our brothers?" Running Fox asked, in surprise.

Yellow Wolf moved his finger across his lips, and turned his eyes toward the Shawnees. Then he moved away, and Running Fox and Spotted Deer followed him. He went well beyond ear-shot of the prisoners before he began to speak.

"Now I will tell you about it," he said. "Our brothers have gone to watch along the ridge. We believe the Shawnees are trying to find us. It is bad. We must get away from here."

"Did you hear anything?" inquired Running Fox.

"Yes," replied Yellow Wolf. "First we heard the call of Gokhos, the owl. It was down there on the side of the ridge. It sounded good. Then we saw Big Dog raise his head and look around. He did not know we were watching him. That made us cautious. Pretty soon we heard the call of Gokhos again. It was in a different place. It did not sound like it sounded before. Then we were afraid. Some of us went to watch. Then we heard the call of Woakus, the fox. We said, 'Running Fox is coming. Perhaps he will meet the Shawnees. We must be ready to help him.' You did not come. Then we heard the call of Woakus again.

## *Shawnee Treachery*

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It was not so close. Then we said, ‘Running Fox did not make it.’ Then we went to watch. I went to that trail. When I heard that call I was not sure about it. That is why I did not answer you. Now you know why we left that place, and came over here. We did it to fool the Shawnees.”

“Well, Yellow Wolf, there is only one thing to do,” Running Fox told him. “We must call our brothers and get away as fast as we can.”

“It is good,” replied Yellow Wolf. “Now we will kill those boastful Shawnees.”

“No,” Running Fox said, firmly. “We will let them walk away.”

“Does a Delaware let his enemies walk away?” Yellow Wolf asked, in amazement.

“A Delaware does what he tells a friend he will do,” declared Running Fox. “A good friend helped us to save Spotted Deer. If we do not let the Shawnees go, much harm may come upon that friend. Perhaps she will be killed. I have told her we will let the great chief Big Dog go to his people. We have found our brother Spotted Deer. It is what we set out to do. Getanittowit sent the Mystery Woman into that camp to help us. She has done a big thing. Now we must listen to her words. She says if Big Dog does not come back it will be bad for her. Perhaps the Shawnees

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## *Spotted Deer*

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will kill her. She is a Minsi. Some time I will tell you about her. She has given Spotted Deer to his brothers. It is a great thing to do. The Shawnees must live."

"You are the leader," Yellow Wolf said, loyally. "We will listen to your words."

Then they were joined by Painted Hawk and Dancing Owl. The scouts had returned to the rendezvous to learn if Running Fox had returned. They were overjoyed to find Spotted Deer.

"It is good," cried Dancing Owl. "You helped Running Fox to take me away from the Shawnees. Now I have helped Running Fox take you away from the Shawnees. Hi, it is good. Now I am going over there to kill that Shawnee who tied me up."

"No," said Running Fox. "We must let him walk away. The old Mystery Woman tells us to do this thing. She is a good friend. We must listen to her words."

"Well, I will close my ears to her words," Dancing Owl said, savagely. "That Shawnee is my enemy. He tried to kill me. He talked bad against me. I am a Delaware. A Delaware does not let his enemies slip away. I am going to kill him."

"No," Running Fox said, quietly. "I have

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## *Shawnee Treachery*

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told you what I propose to do. I am the leader."

Dancing Owl stared threateningly into the eyes of his friend. His heart burned with a desire to avenge the insults and injuries which he had received at the hands of the Shawnees the year previous. He had determined to fully retaliate upon the hated enemy whom fate had placed in his power. Now Running Fox refused him his opportunity. For a moment Dancing Owl rebelled against the authority of his leader. Then he suddenly recalled that Running Fox had saved his life. Gratitude instantly drove the anger from his heart.

"Running Fox, I will listen to your words," he said.

"Come, we are losing time," Running Fox said, impatiently. "We must leave these Shawnees and hurry away. Where is Crooked Foot?"

When they returned to Turning Eagle and the prisoners, they found that Crooked Foot was still missing. His absence made them uneasy. Day had dawned, and the first hint of sunrise was showing above the hills. They realized that it would be dangerous to loiter.

"Come, Yellow Wolf, call Crooked Foot," said Running Fox.

He had barely uttered the words when

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## *Spotted Deer*

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Crooked Foot appeared. He, too, was filled with joy at the sight of Spotted Deer. After he had greeted him, he called Running Fox and Yellow Wolf and led them away to talk.

"We must go away fast," he told them. "I believe a big war party is coming to catch us. There is little time."

"Did you see them?" Running Fox asked, anxiously.

"No, I did not see them but I heard many signals," Crooked Foot told him.

"It is enough—we must go," said Running Fox.

When they returned to their companions, they found Dancing Owl crouching above the Shawnee and threatening to drive his knife into his heart. He rose as Running Fox hurried forward, and laughed mischievously. Running Fox went to the Shawnee chief, and commanded him to sit up. Big Dog obeyed. Then Running Fox addressed him.

"Big Dog, listen to my words," he said. "I am about to give you your life. I am doing this thing because I went to your village and took my brother from your people. If your people had killed my brother, I would have killed you. I told them I would let you go. I am a Delaware. A Delaware makes his words come true. Now listen close. I am about to take that thing

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## *Shawnee Treachery*

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out of your mouth. Then I am going away. If you shout out before I am far away, I will come back and kill you. If you keep quiet a long time, you will live to see your brothers. Yes, I believe they will find you. Keep my words."

Running Fox stooped and untied the buckskin gag. Then the other Shawnee sat up. Running Fox laughed fiercely.

"Striking Bear, I will leave you as you are," he said. "You did many bad things to my brother. He wants to kill you. If you know my words, listen sharp. Take care what you do if you wish to live."

"Come, Delaware, untie my hands and give me my weapons," Big Dog cried, angrily.

"Wait for your brothers," laughed Running Fox. "But do not try to call them. Remember what I have told you."

The Delawares left the enraged Shawnees and hurried down the eastern slope of the ridge. They felt quite certain that the sly Shawnee chief would lose little time in calling his tribesmen. They were barely half-way down the ridge when they heard him shouting.

"I would like to go back and kill that Shawnee," said Dancing Owl.

"It would be foolish," Running Fox told him. "I believe his friends are close by. Perhaps they would catch you. We have done what we

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## *Spotted Deer*

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came to do. Now we must try to get back to our people before something bad happens to us."

"Yes, my brothers, we must keep going," declared Crooked Foot. "I believe the Shawnees will try hard to turn us back."

The reckless scramble down the rough hill-side was a severe ordeal for Spotted Deer. The slope was strewn with boulders and tree trunks, and a dense tangle of brush and vines concealed the pitfalls. Spotted Deer stumbled painfully over the obstructions, striving heroically to conceal his agony. Running Fox, however, was keenly aware of his suffering.

"You are very brave," he said. "Can you keep going?"

"Yes," Spotted Deer replied, grimly.

They had finished the descent and were fighting their way through a heavy thicket of laurel when they suddenly heard the cry of Nianque, the lynx. It sounded behind them, and seemed to come from the top of the ridge.

"The Shawnees have found Big Dog," said Turning Eagle.

"Perhaps they are telling their friends about us," Yellow Wolf suggested, suspiciously.

"Yes, I believe there is some one down here," declared Running Fox. "We must watch sharp."

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## *Shawnee Treachery*

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He wondered if a war party of Shawnees had slipped from the camp during the night, and turned eastward to intercept the Delawares when they left the ridge. The possibility caused him great uneasiness. He knew that if a large company of Shawnees were scouting about the vicinity it would be difficult to avoid them. Then the lynx cry was repeated on their right.

"It is bad," said Crooked Foot. "We are running into a trap."

"The Shawnees are trying to get ahead of us," declared Painted Hawk. "If they turn us back their friends will come up behind us."

"We will watch out," said Running Fox.

They advanced more cautiously. Convinced that a force of their foes was somewhere in the vicinity, they feared blundering into an ambush. Running Fox believed that the Shawnees had separated into several companies, and he realized that it would be difficult to avoid them. The day passed without an encounter, however, and as darkness fell the Delawares felt encouraged. They had reached the wooded ravine where they had spent a night on their way to the Shawnee village. Fearful that Spotted Deer would be unable to continue traveling through the night, Running Fox determined to remain there until daylight.

"We have seen nothing of the Shawnees," he

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## *Spotted Deer*

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said. "We have come fast. We will rest here until it gets light."

"No, no," cried Spotted Deer. "Running Fox, I see that you are trying to make it easy for me. I will not listen to your words. We must keep going. If we stop here, the Shawnees will come up with us. Perhaps some of you will be killed. Come, my friends, listen to my words. I will keep going."

"Spotted Deer, you are a great warrior," Running Fox told him. "You are as strong as Machque, the bear, and as brave as fierce Quenischquoney, the panther."

"Listen," cautioned Yellow Wolf.

The call of Gokhos, the owl, sounded a short distance away. It carried a sinister warning to the Delawares. Their mad flight seemed to have been in vain. The Shawnees were close behind them. There was not a moment to lose.

"Come!" cried Spotted Deer.

"Yes, we must go," agreed Running Fox.

## CHAPTER XIX

### SURROUNDED

FOR two days the Delawares traveled cautiously through the woods without seeing or hearing anything of their foes. They had little doubt that the Shawnees had turned back. Running Fox was elated at his success.

"It is good," he said. "We have done what we set out to do. Nothing bad has happened to us. We have fooled our enemies. Spotted Deer is alive. My heart feels big."

"Running Fox, you are a good leader," Yellow Wolf told him.

They were less than a day's journey from the great river which flowed past the Delaware camp, and they believed that their peril had passed. Before the end of another day they hoped to be with their people. They knew that a splendid welcome awaited them, and the thought made them eager to reach the camp without delay. They hastened along, unmindful of their fatigue.

The day was nearing its close, and they had

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## *Spotted Deer*

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stopped for a few moments on the crest of a low, barren ridge to rest, when they suddenly heard a loud, ringing shout within bow-range of them. Before they could recover from their amazement several arrows sped over their heads.

“Run, run!” shouted Running Fox, as he led the way down the ridge.

They dashed madly down the slope, and turned toward a dense spruce swamp that began a short distance from the base of the ridge. Wild shouts behind them gave warning that they were being hotly pursued. Running Fox looked back and saw a strong company of warriors scrambling recklessly down the rocky hill-side. One glance was sufficient to recognize them.

“The Mohawks! The Mohawks!” he cried in alarm.

The warning struck fear to the hearts of his companions. They knew the fate that awaited them at the hands of those fierce foes, and they fled before them like frightened deer. They gained the edge of the swamp, and rushed wildly into its gloomy depths. They went a considerable distance before they dared to stop. Then they took shelter behind a barricade of fallen trees, and waited anxiously for the appearance of their foes. The shouts had ceased at the bor-

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## *Surrounded*

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der of the swamp, and the silence increased their fears.

"They are creeping ahead to find us," Painted Hawk whispered.

"Well, we can make a good fight here," Running Fox said, boldly.

The twilight shadows had already fallen in the great forest of spruces, and the Delawares knew that it would soon be dark. The thought gave them hope. Unless the Mohawks tracked them directly to their hiding place, they believed that the night might save them from discovery. They waited in trying suspense, expecting each moment to see the dim, shadowy forms of the Mohawks approaching between the trees. As time passed and they failed to appear, the Delawares began to wonder if they really had stopped at the border of the swamp.

"Perhaps they are afraid to follow us into this place," said Painted Hawk.

"Perhaps they went the other way," Dancing Owl suggested, hopefully.

"My brothers, I believe they are outside," Running Fox told them. "They know we are Delawares. They are cautious. Once we fooled them when they were coming to our camp. Perhaps they took us for scouts. Perhaps they believe we are trying to lead them into a trap."

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## *Spotted Deer*

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See, it is almost dark. Pretty soon we will be safe."

His words encouraged his friends. Having escaped from the sudden attack, they believed that for the moment at least, they were safe. They began to wonder how the Mohawks had chanced to be in the vicinity.

"I believe it is a war party," said Running Fox.

"Perhaps they are going to fight our people," Turning Eagle said, uneasily.

"No, I do not believe it," Running Fox told him. "They are too far from the river. I believe they are going to fight the Shawnees. I believe those warriors went back and told their people how the Shawnees took away their canoes. Then I believe they made up a war party and came out to fight the Shawnees."

"Yes, I believe that is true," declared Crooked Foot. "I believe they were going to find the Shawnees, and then we came along."

"Well, if that is so, perhaps they will not try to find us," said Dancing Owl.

"My brothers, I have heard you all talking about this thing," said Yellow Wolf. "Now I will tell you how I feel about it. I believe what Running Fox says is true. But I also believe that we are in great danger. The Mohawks are our enemies. Running Fox and Spotted Deer

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## *Surrounded*

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have carried away their great Medicine Bundle. Running Fox has killed their great chief, Standing Wolf. They are thinking about those things. I believe they would like to kill us instead of the Shawnees. Yes, I believe they will try to find us."

The Delawares gave silent endorsement to his words. They believed that they were in greater peril from the Mohawks than they had been from the Shawnees. They had greater respect for the courage and ability of the former, and they knew that if the Mohawks really made a persistent effort to capture them, it would be far more difficult to escape.

"Hi, what I was afraid of has happened," said Yellow Wolf.

The deep, solemn tones of the great-horned owl had sounded from the opposite side of the swamp. It was the favorite signal of the Mohawks and the Delawares knew only too well what it meant. They suddenly realized why the Mohawks had stopped at the edge of the swamp.

"It is bad," Running Fox said, soberly. "The Mohawks have circled around us. Pretty soon they will close in. Then we must watch out."

It was evident that the crafty Mohawks had separated and surrounded the swamp. There seemed little doubt that they would eventually

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## *Spotted Deer*

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advance from all sides and attempt to drive their enemies from cover. It was a favorite and successful method of securing game, and the Delawares realized that it would be hard to escape from the trap. They listened anxiously to learn if their fears were true. It was not long before they were convinced. The solemn warning of the great-horned owl sounded from the two remaining sides of the swamp. The circle was completed. The Mohawks were ready to advance.

"Lie close, perhaps they will not find us," said Running Fox.

It was a long time before they heard anything to rouse their suspicions. Then they heard soft, guarded signals passing through the night, and they knew that the Mohawks had entered the swamp. They strained their ears to detect the stealthy approach of their foes. Darkness had settled down, and they realized that it would be impossible for the Mohawks to find them unless they blundered directly upon their shelter.

"If they come upon us we must fight them back, and try to get away," said Running Fox.

A few moments afterward they heard a sharp crackling of brush close by. They smiled grimly as they realized that one of the scouts had stumbled into a tangle of dead tree tops. He soon

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*Surrounded*

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extricated himself, and then they heard nothing more of him. They knew, however, that at any moment he might discover their hiding place. The thought kept them alert. Then, as he failed to find them, they took hope.

“He has passed—it is good,” whispered Dancing Owl.

“Sh!” cautioned Running Fox.

He feared that the cunning Mohawk might be listening within bow-length of them. Then they heard the call of the horned owl from the border of the swamp. In a few moments it was answered by one of the scouts. The Delawares felt sure that the main company of their foes was still lurking along the edge of the swamp. The thought alarmed them. They believed that the Mohawks planned to hold them in their hiding place until the night passed. The possibility made escape seem hopeless. Convinced that daylight would make it easy for the Mohawks to find them, they feared that they would soon be overcome and annihilated. The idea startled them. Having survived the perils of their expedition against the Shawnees, they were overwhelmed by the sudden disaster which had overtaken them almost within sight of their village. In the meantime the Mohawks had become quiet, and it was evident that they had

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## *Spotted Deer*

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abandoned the search and were waiting for the darkness to pass.

"It is bad," said Crooked Foot. "When it gets light, they will come in here and kill us."

"We must fight them off," declared Yellow Wolf.

"Perhaps we can get away before the light comes," proposed Dancing Owl.

"No, it is useless to try to get past them," Running Fox told him. "There are many Mohawks around this place. They are watching sharp. If we try to go out, they will kill us."

Then for a long time they continued silent. Each was trying to think of a way out of the predicament. They suddenly realized that they had rushed recklessly into a trap from which there seemed to be no way of escape. Regrets, however, were futile. They knew it was folly to waste time blaming themselves.

"My brothers, we have done a big thing, we must not die," Yellow Wolf told them. "We must find a way out of this thing."

"It will be hard to get away," said Crooked Foot.

"There is only one thing to do," Running Fox declared, suddenly. "We must hold out until our people come to help us."

"How will they know about it?" Crooked Foot asked, in surprise.

## *Surrounded*

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"I will try to go to them," Running Fox said, quietly.

"No, no, you must not do that," Spotted Deer said, anxiously. "You have risked your life to help me. You must not risk your life again. If you try to do this thing, the Mohawks may catch you. If they see who you are, terrible things will happen to you. Come, Running Fox, we will all try to get away. Then if the Mohawks catch us, we will die together."

"Yes, my brother, it is the best way to do," declared Crooked Foot. "Perhaps we will get by them."

"No, my friends, I will not listen to your words," Running Fox declared, firmly. "I believe I can do this thing. I am the leader. I must try to get you out of this."

"Well, Running Fox, if you are going to do this thing I will go with you," Spotted Deer told him.

"No, you cannot do that," said Running Fox. "You must stay here and fight back the Mohawks until I bring our people to help you. Now, my friends, listen sharp to my words. I am going to try to get past the Mohawks. Perhaps it will take me a long time. If the Mohawks catch me, I will make a great shout. If you do not hear it before it gets light, you will know that I got away. Then I will bring

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## *Spotted Deer*

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a big war party. You must keep strong. Keep fighting back the Mohawks until our people come. Now keep these words. I will not make any signals. If you hear any, you will know that I did not make them. Now I am going."

"My brother, I feel bad about this thing," Spotted Deer said, as he grasped the hand of his friend. "If my legs were fast I would not hold back. I will make a big fight."

"I will come back," Running Fox said, bravely.

Then he left them and vanished into the night as silently as a shadow. He turned toward the eastern side of the swamp, as the nearest course to the Delaware camp lay in that direction. Fully alive to the peril which threatened him, he moved through the darkness with the alert, nervous caution of Achtu, the deer. He stopped many times to listen for his foes. As he neared the edge of the swamp, he turned his face toward the sky and called upon Getanitutowit to guide him safely past the watchful Mohawks. Then he heard them somewhere ahead of him. For an instant only he caught the murmur of their voices. It was sufficient to warn him of his peril. He turned sharply from his course and crept away with slow, cautious steps. He went several arrow-flights before he again ventured to approach the edge of the swamp.

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## *Surrounded*

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Once more, however, he heard sounds which drove him back.

"It is bad," he murmured. "The Mohawks are everywhere."

He turned toward the south. Several arrow-flights brought him to the border of the swamp. He stopped to listen. All was silent. The way seemed clear. He hurried forward. A twig snapped sharply beneath his feet. Some one hailed him. He gave several loud snorts to imitate a frightened buck, and bounded noisily through the brush. The Mohawk laughed softly. The trick had deceived him. His suspicions were allayed.

Having passed safely by the Mohawks, Running Fox sped through the night with a light heart. At dawn he climbed to the summit of a high ridge that rose from the west side of the river. Far away to the southward he saw the smoke from the Delaware camp. For some moments he watched it with flashing eyes. Then he raced madly down the ridge. He reached the river a considerable distance below the spot where he had left the canoe of Spotted Deer. He wondered if it would be safe to go up the river in search of it. If the Mohawks had come down the river in canoes, he believed they had left them somewhere near the spot where the Shawnees had kindled the fire. Perhaps scouts

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## *Spotted Deer*

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had been left behind to watch. The possibility made him hesitate. He knew, however, that the canoe offered him the quickest way to reach his people.

"I will go," he said.

He hurried along at the edge of the timber. It seemed a great distance to the spot where he had found the trail of the Shawnees. When he finally came in sight of the charred logs on the shore, he stopped and looked sharply for signs of his foes. There was no evidence of them. He circled cautiously through the woods, and approached the place where he had concealed the canoe. It had disappeared. He stared in astonishment. Who had found it? He felt quite certain that it had been taken away by the Mohawks. The thought awakened his suspicions. He searched through the bushes in the hope of finding their canoes. His efforts were futile. There were no fresh tracks to indicate that the Mohawk war party had visited the spot.

"It is mysterious," he said.

Running Fox suddenly realized that he was wasting time. The thought roused him. Each moment was precious. The slightest delay might prove fatal to his friends. He looked across the river. It was wide, and deep and

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## *Surrounded*

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swift. For an instant only he hesitated. Then he pushed his bow into its wolf-skin case, and waded boldly into the water. It was bitterly cold, and the shallow pools along the shore were crusted with ice. Unmindful of the shock, Running Fox threw himself forward and began to swim.

A bow-shot from the shore he caught the full force of the current and was borne rapidly down the river. Then as he struggled fiercely to free himself, the chill of the water began to cramp his muscles. For an instant his tired limbs refused to work. Weighted down by his buck-skin shirt and breeches, he sank beneath the surface. He fought his way above water, and kicked the cramp from his legs. His strength, however, was rapidly leaving him. The shore seemed very far away. The channel was wider than he had suspected. He appeared unable to escape from the fierce grip of the current. The intense cold was penetrating to his heart. His fingers contracted with cramp. His legs began to drag. His strokes grew steadily weaker. He was losing ground. For an instant he lost hope.

“The fierce Water Monsters will get me!” he cried in dismay.

Then he suddenly thought of his friends. He

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*Spotted Deer*

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had pledged himself to save them. They had placed their confidence in him. Getanittowit had listened to his appeal and aided him to escape from the swamp. The way had been made clear for him to reach his people. Now he was throwing away his life, and sacrificing his friends to the Mohawks. He rallied at the thought. The hot fighting blood rushed to his brain. He continued his desperate battle with the river.

"I must live to help my brothers," he said, savagely.

Struggling frantically, he slowly fought his way across the channel. Stroke by stroke, he dragged himself from the clutches of the current. At last he was free. He had reached a long stretch of quiet water. He took courage. His fear of the dreaded Water Monsters suddenly left him. He swam more easily. He fixed his eyes upon the shore. It was less than a bow-shot away. Slowly, steadily, he shortened the distance. Each stroke strengthened his confidence. At last he cautiously lowered his feet. They struck the bed of the river. A few moments afterward he ceased swimming and began to wade. He staggered from the water and made his way to the edge of the woods. Then he collapsed and crumpled into the brush. It was

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## *Surrounded*

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only a few moments before he recovered and struggled to his feet.

"Am I a woman?" he asked himself, fiercely.

He turned, and started along the river. For a short distance he advanced with slow, unsteady strides. Then he fought back his weakness and forced himself into a swifter pace. It was not long before he was again traveling at his best speed.

"I must go fast—there is little time," he kept telling himself.

The Delawares were lighting the evening fires when Running Fox finally tottered into the camp and fell exhausted before the lodge of his father. The Delawares gathered about him in wild alarm. They had little doubt that some great misfortune had overtaken the scouts who had gone to rescue Spotted Deer. They feared that all but Running Fox had been captured or killed.

"Carry him into the lodge," said Black Panther.

When Running Fox opened his eyes he found himself between bear robes, lying beside the fire in his father's lodge. Black Panther and Sky Dog, the Medicine Man, sat near him. For a moment he looked at them in bewilderment. Then he recalled what had happened. He threw off the robes and sat up excitedly. .

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## *Spotted Deer*

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"Come, my father, call the warriors!" he cried.

"What has happened?" Black Panther asked, calmly.

"The Mohawks have caught our brothers," he told them. "Our brothers are hiding in a big swamp. The Mohawks are all around them. Pretty soon they will rush in and kill them. Spotted Deer is there. We took him away from the Shawnees. Come, call our people. Give me some meat. I must take you back there to help our brothers."

Then, while Running Fox drank great bowls of steaming broth, Black Panther sent a crier through the camp to summon the warriors. A great company gathered before the council lodge. Running Fox rushed wildly from his father's lodge to address them.

"My brothers, there is no time to talk," he cried. "You know what has happened. Come, push your canoes into the water. I will lead you to our brothers."

"This will be a big fight," cried Black Panther, the famous war chief. "If the Mohawks kill our brothers, we will go to the Mohawk village and kill many people. I am your chief. I will lead you."

His words filled the warriors with enthusi-

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*Surrounded*

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asm. They began to dance and sing their war songs. Then they hurried to the river. A few moments later a fleet of canoes moved swiftly away into the twilight. A great war party of Delawares had gone to the aid of their tribesmen.

## CHAPTER XX

### A TIMELY RESCUE

THE departure of Running Fox filled his companions with dismal premonitions of disaster. They had grave doubts that he would be able to pass the alert guards along the edge of the swamp, and they feared that he would either be killed or captured by his foes. They listened anxiously, fearing that at any moment a piercing shout would warn them that their comrade had gone to his death. Then, as the stillness continued, they began to feel more confident. It was a long time, however, before they dared to give expression to their hopes.

"I believe Running Fox got away," Dancing Owl said, finally.

"Perhaps it will take him a long time to get out of this place," Spotted Deer reminded him.

"Well, we have not heard any sounds," Crooked Foot declared, hopefully. "Nothing bad has happened to him."

When the long night finally passed, they felt confident that Running Fox had escaped. The

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## *A Timely Rescue*

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thought thrilled them. They knew that if they could stand off the Mohawks, a strong force of Delawares would eventually come to their rescue.

"We must be strong," said Spotted Deer. "I believe Running Fox will bring our people."

At daylight they heard the owl-calls around the edge of the swamp. They were repeated many times until the woods rang with the weird chorus. The Mohawks were exchanging signals. The Delawares felt certain that their foes were getting ready to close in.

"Now we must lie close," said Spotted Deer.

They crouched far down into the intricate barricade of tree trunks in the hope of escaping the sharp eyes of the Mohawk scouts. They had little hope that those shrewd foes would fail to notice such a promising hiding place. The great chorus of owl-calls had ceased, but there were other signals rising in various parts of the swamp, and the Delawares knew that the search had begun.

"I saw some one pass over there between those trees," Dancing Owl whispered, excitedly.

"Keep watching," said Spotted Deer.

In a few moments the scout again showed himself between the trees. He was moving toward their hiding place. Then he suddenly discovered the confused jumble of fallen trees.

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## *Spotted Deer*

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He immediately disappeared behind the trunk of a great spruce.

"That scout is cautious," whispered Turning Eagle. "I was getting ready to kill him."

"Save your arrows," Spotted Deer cautioned him. "We must keep them until the Mohawks rush up to us."

They knew that the Mohawk was watching from behind the tree. The thought kept them motionless. They felt quite certain that he would not pass on without examining the cover. Then they heard him signaling. Their hopes fled. They knew he had become suspicious.

"He is calling his friends," whispered Yellow Wolf. "There is no hope. They will surely find us."

"Pretty soon we will have to fight," declared Crooked Foot.

As the signal had been answered, the Delawares watched anxiously on all sides for the appearance of other scouts. It was not long before they saw another Mohawk darting swiftly between the trees. He had come from a different direction. As he discovered the hiding place he, too, stopped and took shelter. Then a third Mohawk came from behind them. He approached well within bow-range and crouched to peer into the cover.

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## *A Timely Rescue*

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"That warrior will find us," Yellow Wolf said, fearfully.

An instant later his fears were confirmed. The scout straightened and raised a piercing yell that reverberated threateningly through the swamp. Dancing Owl prepared to shoot his arrow at him, but he sprang behind a tree.

"Well, my brothers, the Mohawks have found us," said Spotted Deer. "Now we must fight. We are in a good place. If you save your arrows until our enemies come close, it will be hard for them to reach us. I believe we can hold them off a long time. Keep close behind these trees. We must keep alive until our brothers come."

Having found their foes, the Mohawks immediately surrounded their hiding place. They were within easy bow-range and some exposed themselves with great boldness, but the Delawares withheld their arrows. They believed that their crafty foes were tempting them to waste their supply.

"Wait," cautioned Spotted Deer.

The Mohawks seemed in no haste to make an attack. They saw that their enemies were in a strong position, and they realized that it might be difficult and costly to dislodge them. Bitter experience had taught them that the Delawares were crafty and fearless fighters who would

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## *Spotted Deer*

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compel them to pay dearly for victory. They believed it would be folly to rush recklessly into a fight before they had carefully considered plans for overcoming them. Leaving scouts to watch, the main company of Mohawks withdrew to hold a council. They stole away so stealthily, however, that the Delawares did not learn that they had gone.

"They are afraid of us," said Turning Eagle. "I do not believe they are going to rush upon us."

"They are very sly and very brave," Spotted Deer cautioned him. "I believe they are getting ready to do something. We must watch sharp."

They waited in great anxiety to learn what their foes intended to do. The delay encouraged them. They felt sure that Running Fox was speeding toward the Delaware camp, and the thought made them strong. Once advised of their predicament, they knew that their people would make desperate efforts to arrive at the swamp in time to save them. The longer the Mohawks postponed the attack, therefore, the stronger became the hopes of the Delawares.

"Perhaps they will hold off until it gets dark again," suggested Dancing Owl.

"No, I do not believe it," said Spotted Deer.

## *A Timely Rescue*

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"They are talking about how to do this thing."

Soon afterward the Mohawks returned within bow-range. They commenced to taunt and threaten and sing their war songs. Then they began to move closer. The heavy stand of timber offered them splendid shelter. They darted quickly from tree to tree, and the Delawares caught only swift, momentary glimpses of them. It was a crafty, cautious method of attack which enabled the Mohawks to advance upon their foes with little peril to themselves.

"They are getting close, we must stop them," Crooked Foot said, anxiously.

"Wait," cautioned Spotted Deer. "If you shoot your arrows you will hit the trees. Wait until the Mohawks rush in."

He had barely finished speaking when an arrow imbedded itself in the tree trunk behind which he crouched. He had been seen by one of the Mohawks. The thought made him more cautious. Aware that the Mohawks were watching for a chance to kill them from ambush, the Delawares realized that it might be fatal to expose themselves.

"Keep quiet," Spotted Deer warned them.  
"The Mohawks are watching sharp."

Then, for some time, neither Delawares nor Mohawks showed themselves. The former crouched low in their shelter, waiting for their

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*Spotted Deer*

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enemies to begin the attack. The Mohawks stood behind trees with their arrows ready and their eyes fixed hopefully on the tangle of tree trunks which sheltered their foes. The Delawares were well pleased at the caution displayed by the Mohawks. They knew that each moment of delay increased their chances of rescue. Several times they saw the faces of their foes peering cautiously around the trees, but the mark was too small to warrant risking their arrows. Then some one addressed them in the Delaware dialect.

"Hi, now we know who you are," he said. "You are Delawares. It is good. We took you for our enemies, the Shawnees. That is why we chased you into this place. Do not be afraid. Come out, Delawares. We will not harm you. Come out and talk with us. Perhaps you can tell us about the boastful Shawnees. Our hearts are good toward you. That is why we held back our arrows when we found out who you are."

For a moment Spotted Deer was tempted to reply to the treacherous words of the Mohawk. Then he suddenly realized that the warrior might recognize his voice. Having been a prisoner in their camp, he believed it would be foolish to risk the chance of being recognized. In

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## *A Timely Rescue*

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the meantime the Mohawk appeared to be growing impatient.

"Well, Delawares, how do you feel about it?" he inquired.

Spotted Deer nodded toward Yellow Wolf. The latter addressed the Mohawk.

"Mohawk, we heard your words," he said. "We are talking about them. You must give us time to decide what to do. There are only a few of us. I see that there are many of you. We must be cautious. We know that you are very fierce. Perhaps if we come out you will take away our arrows. Wait there a little while. Then we will tell you what we have decided to do."

The Mohawk instantly detected the sarcasm which had been skillfully woven into the reply. It filled him with rage, but he realized that it would be foolish to betray himself to his foes. He waited until he had choked back the fierce words that rose to his lips, and then he prepared another trap for the Delawares.

"I see that you are cautious," he said, calmly. "Well, we will not wait for you. We must go to fight the boastful Shawnees. Come out when you are ready. The way is clear. Listen, I am going to tell my friends to go away. You must not try to harm us. If you do, perhaps we will have to kill you."

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## *Spotted Deer*

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"Go, Mohawk, we will save our arrows," laughed Yellow Wolf.

They heard the Mohawk talking loudly to his companions. A few moments afterward they saw many of the Mohawks retreating cautiously into the shadows. They knew at once that it was a wily trick to lure them into the open, and they felt sure that a strong force of scouts was still lurking within bow-shot. They gave no hint of their suspicions, however, as they were overjoyed at the possibility of further delay by the Mohawks. Then they heard shouts and signals from the border of the swamp. They chuckled gleefully as they realized the trouble the Mohawks were taking to deceive them.

"Now watch sharp, I am going to make them show themselves," said Spotted Deer.

He seized a number of brittle twigs and began to break them, while he stamped upon others with his feet. The noise made it appear as if the Delawares were leaving the shelter. Deceived by the trick, a number of alert Mohawk scouts peeped anxiously from behind their trees. The Delawares laughed softly as they discovered them. Aware that they had been tricked, the enraged Mohawks sent a harmless volley of arrows into the barricade.

"Hi, hi, that made them mad," laughed Crooked Foot.

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## *A Timely Rescue*

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For a long time afterward they saw nothing further of their foes. They had little doubt that the scouts still kept watch behind the trees, but they were anxious to know what had become of the tricky Mohawk leader and the rest of the war party. More than half of the day had passed, and the Delawares believed there was slight danger of attack before night. Their minds turned to Running Fox and their people. They believed that he had reached the camp, and that a great war party of Delawares was already speeding to their rescue.

"If the Mohawks wait a little longer, we will fool them," said Dancing Owl.

"Perhaps they will creep up to us when it gets dark," Spotted Deer told him.

"Perhaps our people will come by that time," suggested Turning Eagle.

"No, they cannot get here so quick," declared Yellow Owl. "I have been thinking about it. If Running Fox got to the camp I believe they will come soon after the next sun appears. That is a long time to wait. I believe the Mohawks will try to do some big things before the night goes away."

At that moment they suddenly learned what had become of the crafty Mohawk leader and the warriors who had followed him to the edge of the swamp. A ringing shout rose behind

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## *Spotted Deer*

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them. They turned to find a company of Mohawks rushing upon them. At the same time the warriors who had been concealed behind the trees ran in from the opposite direction. Attacked from both sides, the Delawares were momentarily bewildered. Their foes were at the barricade before they recovered from their surprise.

"Come, Delawares, fight for your lives!" cried Spotted Deer.

The Mohawks had abandoned their caution and were exposing themselves with unusual recklessness. Unable to reach their foes with arrows, they were attempting to force their way into the tangle of logs to beat down the Delawares with their war clubs. The fight soon became a fierce hand-to-hand struggle. The Delawares, however, had the advantage. Protected by the dense cover, they fought with a desperate ferocity that astonished their foes. Spotted Deer drove his arrow through a Mohawk who had clambered over the barricade and was about to crush his skull with his war club. Yellow Wolf seized another warrior and threw him back into the arms of his comrades. Crooked Foot and Turning Eagle fought side by side and drove back the Mohawks with a deadly volley of arrows. Dancing Owl struck down a warrior who was about to kill Yellow

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## *A Timely Rescue*

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Wolf. Then the Mohawks gave way and rushed to cover. The attack ended as suddenly as it began.

"Hi, that was a good fight," Yellow Wolf laughed, excitedly, as he examined a gash on his arm.

"We showed the Mohawks how to fight," Spotted Deer said, grimly.

Except for the slight wound which Yellow Wolf received, the Delawares escaped unharmed. As the Mohawks outnumbered them six or eight to one, they were greatly elated at their success. They had little fear that the attack would be renewed before dark. The Mohawks had carried off their disabled comrades, and the Delawares were unable to learn what the effort had cost them. They had withdrawn beyond arrow-range and were shouting and singing war songs.

"They sound very fierce, but we made them run," Dancing Owl said, boastfully.

"They will come back when it gets dark," Yellow Wolf warned him.

The thought made them serious. They knew that the night would give the Mohawks a great advantage. It would enable them to creep close up to the shelter, and the Delawares feared that it would be impossible to discover them. They realized, therefore, that although they had suc-

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## *Spotted Deer*

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cessfully resisted the first savage attack of their foes they were still in great danger. They believed that the Mohawks would make a still more determined effort under cover of the darkness.

"Perhaps we can fool them," said Turning Eagle. "When it gets dark we will creep away from here. Then perhaps we can get out of this swamp when the Mohawks rush to this place to fight us."

"No, my brother," Spotted Deer told him. "The Mohawks have found us. They are very sharp. They will keep us here. I believe they are watching close by. When it gets dark, they will come closer. If we leave this place, I believe we will be wiped out."

"It is true," said Yellow Wolf. "We must stay where we are."

In the meantime the Mohawks had become silent. The Delawares instantly became alert. They wondered if their foes were again advancing noiselessly through the timber. The sun has disappeared, and the twilight shadows were creeping into the swamp. The Delawares kept sharp watch on the spaces between the trees. The Mohawks, however, failed to show themselves.

"What do you make of it?" Crooked Foot asked Spotted Deer.

## *A Timely Rescue*

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"I believe they are waiting until it gets dark," said Spotted Deer.

They watched uneasily as the light slowly faded from the swamp. The approach of darkness filled them with dread. The night threatened them with disaster. They wondered if they would live to see the dawn. Vague, alarming doubts entered their minds. They became discouraged and depressed. Then they roused themselves with the thought that their people were rushing to their assistance. It gave them hope, and strengthened their courage. They believed that the Delawares were already well on their way toward the swamp. They told themselves that they must hold out until they arrived. Their hearts beat wildly at the possibility of another sudden victory over the Mohawks.

"Our people will come," Spotted Deer said, confidently. "Pretty soon we will see the Mohawks running like rabbits."

The swamp was almost dark. It was difficult to see between the trees. The shadows were lengthening. Night was closing its long black fingers about the forest. All was hushed. The Delawares believed that the hour of peril was at hand. They peered fearfully from their cover, and listened closely for the approach of their foes.

"What has become of them?" Crooked Foot

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## *Spotted Deer*

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asked, suspiciously, when half of the night had passed.

"I do not know what to make of it," Spotted Deer told him.

"Perhaps they have gone away," said Dancing Owl.

"No," declared Yellow Wolf. "Keep watching. They will come."

The night was far gone when they finally heard sounds which convinced them that the Mohawks were close at hand. A soft, cautious signal sounded through the darkness. Some moments afterward a twig cracked. The Delawares prepared to defend themselves. They feared that their foes were creeping silently toward the barricade.

"Get ready, they are close by," Yellow Wolf cautioned.

"They are here!" shouted Turning Eagle, as he shot his arrow.

An instant afterward the piercing war cry rang in their ears, and the Mohawks charged recklessly upon the shelter. They scrambled wildly into the mass of fallen timber and attempted to reach the Delawares. However, as only a few at a time could force their way into the dense tangle, the Delawares drove them back with a deadly volley of arrows. Then they made another desperate attack, and several war-

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## *A Timely Rescue*

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riors actually got within reach of the Delawares. The latter attacked them with great courage, and soon found themselves fighting at close quarters in the dark. Encouraged by the success of their comrades, the rest of the Mohawks were fighting their way into the tangle.

"Die like men!" shouted Spotted Deer, as he hurled himself upon one of his foes.

At that instant a terrified yell rang through the night. It came from the edge of the swamp. It had barely died away before the thrilling Delaware war cry rose from a hundred throats. The Mohawks turned in dismay. The Delawares raised a great shout that filled the hearts of Black Panther and his warriors with joy.

"Our brothers are alive!" cried the great war chief. "Come, Delawares, wipe away the boastful Mohawks."

Aware that they had been trapped, the demoralized Mohawks scrambled from the tangle and fled into the night. They had not gone an arrow-flight before they encountered the Delawares. The latter had completely surrounded the scene of battle.

"Wait, Mohawks, our people have come to meet you!" laughed Yellow Wolf. "Do not be afraid. Wait. We are coming out to talk with you. Wait, Mohawks, perhaps our people will tell you about the Shawnees."

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## *Spotted Deer*

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The Mohawks had taken shelter behind trees, hoping that the Delawares might rush by them. The Delawares, however, hunted them out with the calm, thorough persistence of wolves. They took a terrible vengeance upon the fierce foes who had attempted to annihilate their tribesmen. Few of the Mohawks escaped. Those that got away fled wildly toward the north to carry the news of their disaster to their people.

"My brothers, you are alive—it is enough," cried Running Fox, as he rushed to meet his friends.

"Running Fox, you have given us our lives," cried Crooked Foot. "You are a great war leader."

"My brother, you took me away from the Shawnees," Spotted Deer said, with emotion. "It was a great thing to do. Now you have done another great thing. Come, I will go and tell Black Panther and our people about it."

(1)

THE END





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